

The future of Vatican

Article from *La Voce* del (nuovo) Partito Comunista Italiano, n.23 – July 2006.

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1. Introduction

On 20th April 2005, on occasion of the funerals of John Paul the Second (Karol Wojtyła 1920 - 1978 - 2005) and of coming to throne of Benedict the Sixteenth (Joseph Ratzinger, 1927), the Provisional Commission of new Italian Communist Party ((n)PCI) released a statement, saying that “Benedict the Sixteenth will be one of the latest, or perhaps the last Pope”. The abolishment of Vatican and of all other Catholic Church’s privileges and the nationalization of all properties the Lateran Treatise, Concordat of 1929 and following modifications gave to Catholic Church, are the core of the Third of the Ten Immediate Measures, i. e. the Measures that will be adopted immediately after the seizure of power by working class and its Communist Party in Italy (see “La Voce”, n. 5, July 2000).

Some comrades asked for clarifications and explanations about this point in (n)PCI’s programme. It is so important that it deserves our complete attention. Vatican, Papacy, Roman Church’s political, economical and cultural power, the articulated clerical and laic structure by which Vatican Curia and Pope exercise it in Italy and all over the world, are themes already been treated in our Party’s publications. However we didn’t expose many aspects of the question, nor we elaborated them adequately to the importance they have in present Italian Communist Party’s activity and strategy. So, about this matter the Party has to do a wide, lasting, repetitive and multiform work of propaganda and agitation. It also has to elaborate the single aspects of the matter so as to get a conception and a line of action superior to current ones and to the ones of the old Italian and international Communist movement.

Our Party must have a well-founded conception and a clear line of action about the question of Vatican. We need an historical perspective scientifically built (that is, by scrupulous seriousness), in order to found the objectives we shall get in the future on past course of things, the objectives we propose to the masses because they need them and that they must consciously contribute to get. It’s not possible to carry out the struggle for socialism in Italy without facing the question of Vatican on theoretical and political level. The solution of question of Vatican is essential part of the specific theory of socialist revolution in Italy **(1)**. An Italian Communist party that doesn’t face the question of Vatican surely is an immature or an opportunist Communist party. Vatican’s role in our country and in its history is very important: since the fall of Roman Empire (Fifth Century A. C.) to Renaissance (about Eleventh Century) as central institution of feudal European world; since then to Unity of Italy (1870) as centre of the struggle of feudal world against the coming of bourgeois world in Europe; since 1870 as essential support of bourgeoisie’s direction and domination over Italy and world. A Communist party that haven’t or doesn’t propagandize or support a conception and a well-determined line about the question of Vatican is worth as a Communist party without a well-determined conception about working class’ mobilization (or about the seizure of power) and without a line for its action on this matter.

Italian Communist movement’s history confirms this assertion.

Anticlericalism was an essential contribute, among those the Italian Socialist Party gave to Communist movement of our country (1892-1921). However, it confused the struggle against Vatican and Church with the educational activity, the ideological struggle within popular masses, against the feudal and individualistic ethics (it's enough to think of woman's role and sexual ethics), against degrading rites (from anti-Semitic ceremonies only recently abolished to mortifying and self-damaging manifestations). The antagonistic contradiction with Vatican and Roman Church get confused with a contradiction within people about conception of the world and new epoch ethics. The confusion between ideological and educational struggle and political struggle against Vatican checked and hindered to carry out the second one effectively - see Italian Socialist Party's hostility towards Modernism, that since 1870 to 1920 was the left wing of Catholic world in doctrinal, moral and social (political, economical, etc.) matters (2).

The question of Vatican and Roman Church was one of central axes in working out the strategy of socialist revolution in Italy by Antonio Gramsci (1891 – 1937), who gives himself up to it since 1923, when undertook the direction of PCI mandated by Communist International, until he died. He clearly indicated that the question of Vatican was emerging point and synthesis of peasant and Southern Italy's questions and, in addition, of women's question. So, it was and is a national question of socialist revolution in our country (3).

During the Resistance and after it, the acceptance of Vatican and Roman Church's power was a main component of the right line of PCI. It led first to corruption and then to desegregation and dissolution of PCI. Party's left wing wasn't able to set against it anything but a shy revival of the anticlericalism of PSI.

In order to fix Party's guideline in a scientific (not opportunist nor pragmatist) way, it is necessary to elaborate a right conception of Vatican and Roman Church's nature, role and laws of development. We need to do it in order to not be slave to circumstances, appearances, sensations and impressions, "instinct", or to operations, manoeuvres, provocations, diversions and manipulation by Church and bourgeoisie. On the contrary, we need to do it in order to act with a strategic vision, to have a good grip of the initiative and spread out tactical operations consistent with our own strategy and, at the same time, closely corresponding to circumstances, to our enemy's status and the ratios of strength.

At first sight, the suppression of Vatican and of Roma Church's political, economical and cultural power looks so much difficult that it seems an impossible and reckless task. Not by chance, many subjective forces of socialist revolution (SFSR) evade the problem. But, regarding of it, it's worth the principle stated by Roman philosopher Seneca (4 B. C. – 65 D. C.) long time ago: "It's not because some tasks are difficult that we don't face them. On the contrary, it's because we don't dare to face them that we think them difficult." This principle is worth today regarding Vatican's suppression so as regarding the smashing of US empire. The Vatican's suppression is a need and a task of international Communist movement, not only of Italian Communist movement. As a matter of fact, Vatican carries out its counterrevolutionary and anti – Communist role on an international level and in most of countries in the world. It's an international power that has its centre in Italy and roots in many countries. It has a decisive role in the course of things in our country, and an important role in the course of things in many other countries. It draws people and means from Italy for its world activity and draws people and means from the entire world for its activity against Italian popular masses. It's a case similar to American one. So, because of the same reason, US empire's smashing is a need and task of international Communist movement. But, as the decisive and also the main role in smashing US empire concerns American popular masses, working class and Communists, so the decisive and also main role in suppress Vatican concerns Italian popular masses, working class and Communists.

We Italian Communists should do wrong hiding this historical and internationalist indispensable task of theirs from working class and popular masses. We should not educate popular masses nor

ourselves to be able to carry it out, and so we should prepare conditions for our and their defeat. On one side, to hide from working class and popular masses this task of theirs would be sign of a subjectivist conception: we should claim ourselves to be executors of a basic task of socialist revolution in our country, and not the working class and the popular masses. On the other side, it would be sign of lack of trust in Italian working class and popular masses' revolutionary capability. On the contrary, history of Italy shows that several times popular masses' revolutionary movements failed just because their leading groups weren't equal to their role, and not because there were lacking the masses' outburst, revolutionary mobilization and heroism. In 1893-1898, in 1919-1921, in 1945-1948, in the Seventies of past century, they lacked a direction able to transform working class' wide social hegemony in political rule over the country. They lacked it because the leading group that popular masses were following, and who openly promised them or, at least, gave them to believe that he wanted a revolutionary change, drew back facing the action (which moreover it wasn't prepared for, because it itself didn't believe in what was saying or giving to believe **(4)**).

2. Vatican and Catholic Church in the world

Vatican and Roman Church are a sufficiently delimited organization. In order to carry out its anti – Communist and reactionary work in Italy and all over the world it uses its own forces, which recruits, forms, organizes, distributed and directs as an army. But, for the same work, it also uses adhesion and mass contribution of the believers in Catholic religion, in a different way. We never, nor in any way, must consider these two things as only one. Particularly, we never nor in any way must think that Vatican represents or expresses the will or even only the orientation of the mass of believers; that its existence and orientation depends on the mass of believers. The Pope and his Church don't consider themselves bound to their believers' opinion and will. On the contrary, they pretend that believers must be bound to opinion and will of clergy, bishops and after all of Pope, that they profess as inspired by God and not liable to men's criticism.

It's wrong to confuse Catholic Church for the followers of catholic Christian religion: Church itself has laid, keeps and imposes a clear – cut distinction between believers (that it calls "it herd") and Church: secular auxiliaries and nuns, priests and friars, bishops are all "shepherds" bound to carry out Pope's orders. Pope is the absolute king, heading everybody. Shepherds haven't the duty to raise little sheep of the herd at their level. On the contrary, every shepherd has the duty to keep sheep of the herd in the position that Church's doctrine and regulations assigns them. Only shepherds own and manage the truth that "comes to them from God". Pope excommunicates (excludes from the rites) those of the herd who don't obey, by millions and tens of millions. Pius the Twelfth excommunicated ten of millions of believers who didn't submit to his anti – Communist conceptions, opinions and directives. The Roman Church excommunicates ten of millions of believers because they divorce, live together without be married, have homosexual relationships, legally have abortion or cooperate with legal abortions or generally do not submit to her directives on matters which the Church is particularly interested to **(5)**. Little sheep of the herd have no chance to choose their shepherds, that is their bishops and priests. They must only obey them. Till now even the requests to be consulted are been rejected. It is the Pope who chooses bishops in his unquestionable judgement, and assigns them to this or that task (in Concordats, the Pope had to assign the power to approve of papal nominations to the government). Then, there are the bishops who select, form, consecrate and nominate priests and exclude them when they don't obey. In every country, Catholic Church is not only an institution independent from State and citizens of that country. It is also an institution independent from believer citizens of that country. It claims to be on service of eternal salvation of their immortal souls and in the name of it pretends to rule them in their earthly activity. The local believers must maintain it, undergo and obey. Catholic Church directs or influences the State but without bearing any responsibility for the consequences

of its activity. When Church talks of religious freedom, it means freedom of Vatican to form, select, control, nominate, exclude, direct the functionaries ruling local believers' communities, without any interference by them. In Church's opinion, religious freedom is freedom for Vatican and exclusion of any freedom for believers in matters of doctrine, ethics, discipline and organization.

We Communists must properly distinguish Roman Church from followers of Catholic religion, Church as clerical organization from the Church as a whole of believers and their communities. This distinction is not an invention of ours, nor an outcome of our activity, nor an arbitrary distinction. It is within the things themselves, it's a practical distinction. It's a contrast between believers' communities ("the God's people") and ecclesiastic Authorities, that is the bureaucratic structure, the body of functionaries headed by Vatican, that Vatican selects, forms, nominates and binds on itself through an articulated and growing series of provisions – economical dependence, oaths, vows, threats, punishments, awards, etc. – just because it tends to desegregation and dispersion. This contrast is in today's reality, and in history since the end of Middle Age till now. We must care and deepen this distinction, support the efforts of believers' communities to become independent of the ecclesiastic hierarchy and to democratically take upon themselves their life's management and their religious activities (their conception of the world, their ethics, their rite – the religious freedom) and the choice of their "shepherds". We must support their efforts to consolidate every level reached by their movement of emancipation so that it could develop at a higher level **(6)**. We must suppress the ecclesiastic structure and the Vatican that heads it. At the same time we must recognize to believers' communities the freedom of faith and the practise of it. So as it's already stated in our Programme, the Socialist State should recognize to Catholic believers' communities, so as to communities of believers in every other religion, opinion, ethics or rite, freedom to profess and practice their religion and ensure that they really have at their disposal means and resources they need to do it, insofar as they don't be prejudicial to basic interests of society and individuals. The role of Catholics' communities in socialist society before, and in Communist society after, will be determined not by our ideas but by the contribution they will give to the common work for creating a new world, a higher social order. Here we shall involve ourselves only with Vatican and the ecclesiastic structure it directs, manages, and has at its orders and disposal. Only marginally and if necessary we shall involve ourselves of Catholic religion, its followers and their communities.

Vatican is the centre of a world network in many layers that constitutes Roman Catholic Church: the Roman Curia with her nuncios and apostolic delegates present in greater part of countries in the world and in international institutions; the secular clergy in dioceses and parishes with its bishops, priests, auxiliaries, co-operators and laic associations dependent from secular clergy (as the Catholic Action), a great number (among one and two hundreds) of religious and laic, male and female congregations and orders, some present in ten of countries and with ten thousands of members, the Catholic mass organizations (unions, associations as the ACLI – the Italian Catholic Workers' Association -, professional and categories' associations, charitable institutions, cooperatives, mutual aid societies, etc.). They are formally independent, that is they hold congresses to discuss the activity done, draw the line to follow, elect directing organs. Nevertheless they are headed through directing organs by Vatican that controls them also through ecclesiastic assistants (chaplains nominated by ecclesiastic hierarchy who carry out role of advisors, spies, political police).

In many countries this network constitutes a system of political power parallel to that of respective State, little or nothing permeable to the evolution of public opinion and civil society's orientation in any of those countries. They don't account for their behaviour to the local institution they direct, but only to Vatican, by which they receive as well instructions about goals and general line to follow and means for operating, when they don't succeed in drawing them directly from

local Authorities, ruling class or believers. The Church has at its disposal great financial resources of her own, and every kind of experiences and resources; its world structure moves themwhere and when it thinks it necessary. It avails itself of a great number of men and women, selected and formed, full time working. It manages a huge number of school institutes of every order and degree (from nursery schools to universities). There, openly or in a hidden (“subliminal”, implicit) way, it forms millions of students from which it recruits the best qualified. It owns or at least manages a great number of centres of research, mass media (newspapers, reviews, press agencies, TV and radio stations, publishing houses, cinema productions, etc.), welfare institutions, (hospitals, surgeries, hospices, charitable institutions, etc.). It has accumulated and uses a skilled experience in gathering and elaborating information, in methodically carrying out campaigns of public opinion’s orientation and manipulation and in plotting political and financial operations and intrigues. Sometimes and on some matters, Vatican has an information service more precise, wide and abundant than any other State.

The Vatican with its Church is by far the most powerful multinational company existing in the world. It’s the widest, most powerful and centralized private organization that ever existed. From some points of view, it has characteristics and privileges of a State and it is recognized as such by the greatest part of world governments. Owing to it, has an abundance of privileges not enjoyed by NGO nor by any other private international associations, the privileges reserved to foreign States’ diplomatic delegations: diplomatic bags for communications, immunity from police and magistracy’s action for the accredited diplomatic staff, extraterritoriality of diplomatic seats, tax and customs advantages.

Back in 1924, on *La Correspondance Internationale*, the Communist International organ, Antonio Gramsci wrote this about Vatican: “ In Italy the Vatican ecclesiastic system includes 200.000 people: it’s a shocking number, particularly if you take in account that it includes thousands and thousands of people endowed with intelligence, culture, skilled capability in art of intrigue and methodical and silent conduct of political plans. Many of them embody the most ancient and experienced traditions of masses’ organization and, consequently, they are the greatest reactionary force existing in Italy. It’s a force as more dreadful as it is insidious and elusive. Before attempting its coup d’état (in 1922, editor’s note) the Fascism had to make a deal with it. They say that Vatican, even if it was very interested in Fascism’s advent, made pay dearly for its support. The rescue of the Bank of Rome (in 1923, editor’s note), where many ecclesiastic funds were deposited, cost more than a milliard of liras to Italian people (for understanding the worth of this number, it must be noted that in 1921 the whole Italian public debt amounted to 100 milliards of lire, editor’s note).

What we have said till now and what we shall say will confirm that in many countries (and, among them, in all European and American countries), Vatican is able to field important internal and international forces against any political upheaval or trend it thinks is need to oppose. The struggle it carried out in Twenties and Thirties, in Mexico, and in Eighties, in Nicaragua, against first socialist countries and Communist movement in last century, showed what it is able to do when he really wants to contrast a political trend (7). This closes the argument about its implication in crimes of Nazism, Fascism, Francoism, colonialism and all the terrorist regimes by which the ruling class stained with blood many countries in Europe and Americas in the latest hundred years, and about its real compliance, if not cooperation, in front of the aggression that Washington government is carrying out. If anything, we have to ask why Vatican gives out so many public statements against the wars which it is a party and morally responsible to, and which at least it covers on the diplomatic and information level (8). More generally, who wants to envisage things must consider Vatican’s role not only for what it did in the past and what it does publicly today, but also for what it didn’t do and don’t does; for what it prevent from doing diverting attention and mobilization of men and women it directs thanks to the ruling means it inherited; for what men and women it directs need and it doesn’t care for. The Vatican has a lot of talk about life’s defence for preventing

the use of contraceptive methods and sanitary assistance for women who have abortions, but what does he do against the undeclared extermination war the imperialist bourgeoisie carries out against popular masses all over the world, a war killing and mortifying millions and millions of people (according to UN, only the children under five dead for under nourishment are more than six million every year)?

Today, few States are able to compete with Vatican's multinational organization. It is able to mobilize and in case to concentrate in a single country functionaries, financial means and every kind of resources it gets from its reserves or gathers from other countries at the moment, therefore to acquire an important if not prevailing force in political, economical and cultural relations of every country, and to mobilize against it an outstanding if not decisive international pressure, (political, financial or economical or even military). The Vatican tries to get out of any responsibility when it's convenient. However, in front of all clashes and struggles dividing the world today, its real responsibility is equal to the force it's able to mobilize and spread, not to the commitment it declares.

Vatican's power network branches out from Rome in Italy, in rest of Europe including countries where people of European origin live and a part of European colonies in Africa and Asia, and in rest of the world.

In some measure, the distribution of Vatican network in the world, the map of its density and force country by country, is secret. It depends on occulted or anyway restrained and confidential relationships that Vatican has with Authorities or other exponents of ruling class. However, it's possible to have an approximate idea about it and its evolution in the course of time by yearbooks of Vatican, local churches, Catholic congregations, orders and mass associations. The simple denounce of such map would have political relevance and reveal Vatican's responsibilities in present chaos. From this map it results a close connection between Vatican's world distribution of the network and 1. European peoples remained totally or at least in an important part Catholics at the end of "war religions" which bathed Europe in blood in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (since Luther's excommunication in 1520 to Westphalia Treatises in 1648); 2. these people's migrations in new countries, where they confined in reservations, destroyed or absorbed the original inhabitants (Americas and Australia); 3. countries where colonial domination was carried out up to delete local people's cultural identity (sub-Saharan African countries, Philippines, and other minor).

So, there's a close relation between Vatican power's world network and Europe's history and its expansion in the world. On one side, this explains the world extension of Vatican power's network. It's a consequence of the role European people took in the entire world in latest six centuries, with the coming, starting from then, of capitalist mode of production and the world unification in the world imperialist system. On the other side, this shows as well the (first) Vatican's weakness. In latest ten centuries, despite of all its efforts of evangelization, missionary action and huge means employed to make them effective, it succeeded to give its power network roots among local populations only where it was protected and pushed forward by a friendly colonial power, which used missionaries' charitable, educational, humanitarian religious activity for dividing the local population, eliminate its traditional cultural and linguistic cohesion, submit it, break their resistance, induce it to cooperate. Nowhere Vatican succeeded to do something similar to what first Christians did in Roman Empire, in first four centuries of Christian era (i. e. since First to Fourth Century), and what in some measure they continued to do in further five centuries (since Fifth to Ninth) towards the peoples come in touch with former Roman Empire's people through barbarian invasions: Germanic, Northern and Slav peoples. In the period from Fifth to Ninth century the Roman Church was the collective organic intellectual (interpreter, promoter, organizer, direction and consciousness) for preservation of invaded population and their combination and fusion with invaders until the constitution of a new society, the European feudal society. The projects to evangelise Turkish and Chinese peoples, whose main promoter were respectively Nicola Cusano (1401-1460) and Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), remained a dead letter (9).

On the contrary, since the end of early Middle Ages until today there has been a following of restrictions, first territorial and then social, extensively and in – depth, of Roman Catholic Church’s influence.

The first two ones damaged Roman Church when it was in its full force of totalitarian expression and maximum institution of feudal world. They are consequences of European decay in international relations. Facing Arabians and then Turkish’s advance (since Seventh to Seventeenth century) Roman Church lost Asia Minor, Northern Africa and part of Eastern Europe. In the second place with the Eastern Schism (since 863 to 1054), Roman Church lost a great part of Slav peoples and Eastern Europe.

Then, in Western Europe there were two new waves of restrictions. They were consequences of the crisis suffered by Roman Church (organic institution of European feudal society for the world conception it embodied, the ethics and rites it support and its organization) owing to bourgeois society’s ascent in Western Europe. Roman Church’s crisis is an aspect of feudal society’s crisis and decline.

1. First, there were the religious popular movements and heresies in first centuries after the year one thousand. However, with time they were absorbed by Church and gave rise to new religious orders (Franciscans, Dominicans, etc). Thomism [the philosophical system of Tommaso d’Aquino, editor’s note] is a wide-ranging defensive operation in front of the advancing bourgeois world. Tommaso d’Aquino (1225-1274) demonstrated that the feudal conception of the world (the faith) is compatible with what rising bourgeoisie was stating (the reason). But Roman Church’s crisis became uncontrollable with the Reformation. Since 1517, the year Luther (1483-1486) published his 95 Theses, to Council of Trent (1545-1563) and Westphalia Treatises (1648), the Reformation takes away from Roman Church great part of Northern Europe: Scandinavian countries, Great Britain and great part of territories of Holy Roman Germanic Empire. What’s more, it reduced clergy’s role and power not only in the countries where triumphed, but in all Christian countries.

Seemingly, Reformation kept Church’s crisis within the religious level. It seemed to propose a change of Roman Church’s conception of the world, ethics and rites, as former heresies did: in reality the change was such that it broke with the conception of the world that Roman Church embodied: the conception where the entire universe was recreated in image and likeness of feudal society that, from courtly economy, through subsequent steps, rises to Emperor and Pope, who was God in this world, the only one directly connected with God and authorized to speak in its name (bishops and the rest of clergy acted only by Pope’s proxy). On field of images, feelings and ideas, the Reformation expressed the new social relations that bourgeoisie was creating in Europe: the merchants, artisans, bankers and professional men’s break with feudal divisions, mediations, authorities, orders, practices, values, uses, customs and relationships. In its turn, it strengthened and accelerated that break. It compelled and encouraged every individual to enter directly in relation with God through his own faith: so did he with every other individual (with society) through his personal money. Reformation didn’t completely deleted Roman Church, which embodied the old European feudal structure, from European society. It reduced it to the status of a particular force counter opposed to Protestant (Reformed) Churches, within the whole Europe, which maintained its unity **(10)**. Counter Reformation couldn’t do anything but accept this reduction. It preserved Roman Church from total destruction, but it changed and delimited it, stiffening its doctrine, ethics, rites and organization. It divided it from the masses, superimposed and counter opposed it to them: it became State.

Metaphorically, with Counter Reformation the Catholic Church retreated in an entrenched field. There it stayed with its faith articles reflecting the intellectual evolution, scientific knowledge, social experiences and political organization of humanity in Middle Age Europe. It was a humanity waiting for defence by its warriors and feudal lords and bearing plunders, epidemics and famines. It was a humanity with moral rules translating in rules of individual behaviour what men must do in

order to keep in life and develop a society continuously threatened by invasions and plunders, whose survival to epidemics, famines and wars depend on the abundance of births and on unity of family, the base unit of labour for a society chronically lacking of manpower. The Church crystallized as superstructure of a society with nature, contradictions, problems and aspirations quite different from those of the society that would fully develop in following centuries.

Consequently, among its members and believers it has been developed the phenomenon of double, triple and quadruple morals, theorized by Jesuits' casuistry with connected individual mental and moral dissociation. In order to preserve its privileges and impose its authority, the Church less and less could count upon individuals' force and inner conviction, upon its good reasons. It was obliged to turn to the force of secular Authorities of new European societies and so to depend on them.

So, the Church ceased to be the institution elaborating and embodying masses' needs, the organic intellectual of masses. It looked suspiciously at any newness, change and idea. It made impossible or difficult its same development, its transformation from inside as it still occurred during the first Renaissance. The Society of Jesus was the last religious order. The great number of orders and congregations afterwards constituted has made no innovation on religious field – that Council of Trent stiffened and codified “for ever”. They had a disciplinary duty, role and meaning. That is, they were means to keep or re-establish Roman Church's authority upon this or that section of the masses, upon this or that field slipping out of its hands. The Church's decay would continue till Nineteenth century, when the imperialist phase of bourgeoisie began. After Reformation, the whole political, philosophical, juridical, cultural activity that in the Middle Age constituted Church's direct exercise of power – as organic intellectual, interpreter and vanguard of mass population – became the machine for exercising indirect power, influence upon political Authorities and authoritative exponents of civil society (bankers, industrialists, traders, professional men, and so on). Jesuit cardinal Roberto Bellarmino (1542-1621) explicitly theorized the indirect exercise of power by Roman Church. It ceased to express and orient directly the masses' practical activity, lost its role of popular leader. It relied on secular Authorities and new chiefs of civil society. It used popular masses where and when it can did it, if it needed them as mass to manoeuvre and pressure towards Authorities, when they were reluctant to give service or went too far or fast.

2. Finally, it occurred the restriction due to Enlightenment and French Revolution (1789). Since Eighteenth Century these two movements corroded the Roman Church's power, firstly over ruling classes and then, specially in France and in some other European regions, over European peoples' mass still subjected to the Church still after Protestant Reformation. The mass overcoming of religious conception of the world began. It was a process closely tied to bourgeoisie's political triumph and ushered in current era.

As a result of these two latest restrictions, Roman Church definitively ceased to carry out the social role it did in Middle Age and had to define its role facing the basic forces contending the direction of present society: bourgeoisie and proletariat.

The Vatican and its world structure are then the historical remnant of Papacy in present world, the greater of the two great universal (that is, common to whole Europe) institutions of European Middle Age. Roman Popes are a dynasty lasting since about 2000 years. It's a very long period, but not an exception compared to other important dynasties. The Egyptian Pharaohs' one lasted about 3000 years, since 3200 to 300 B.C. The Chinese Emperors' one lasted about 4000 years, since 2100 B.C. to 1911 A.C.

Roman Popes' power gradually constituted itself after Western Roman Empire's fall, in Fifth Century B. C. Since 756 to 1870, that is for about 1100 years, the Roman Pope was God on earth and king of kings, but was also a king like others: feudal lord before and then absolute monarch of

some region in Italian peninsula, which, with little and temporary appendices in other zones of Europe, constituted the Papal States.

Christian religion formed and spread starting from peoples and social groups that were oppressed within Roman Empire's social and political order. It was born as ideological form of the practical movement that was subverting Empire's political and social constitution. That Empire had slavery as constituting cell.

Seemingly, the new religion's paroles ("Neither free nor slaves. Everyone is son of same God and redeemed by same Christ") proclaimed universal values; the abolishment of slavery. However, their concrete meaning was to be flag of the concrete historical movement which result was the subversion and decay of Roman Empire deprived of its basic constitutive cell. Slavery survived here and there as auxiliary and secondary social relation. In some following times it even recovered strength: the Christians enslaved American indigenes and transferred millions of slaves from Africa to their American colonies. This shows and confirms that Christian movement's practical contents were the abolition of Roman Empire's concrete social and political order, not the universal achievement of slavery abolition. Christians never put into a concrete order the parole by which they subverted the empire, even if they never reestablished the slavery order they destroyed **(11)**. In Christian countries slavery was legally abolished and banned (became a crime) only during the Nineteenth century.

On the contrary, the new religion embodied in European feudal society and, it assumed this society's forms in Roman Church. The European Middle Age is Roman Church's Golden Age. Still today the ideal world illustrated by fundamentalist Catholic thinkers has forms, values and relations of Middle Age European society. Middle Age with its court economy corporations and hierarchy remains the Church's dream and it's the source which many if not all the European reactionary movements (Fascism, Nazism, etc.) draw their inspiration from. In the conditions created in the Europe upset by Roman Empire's collapse and by barbaric invasions, Christian religion was the ready form, prepared by previous history occurred in invaded territories, of the fusion between submitted and invaders peoples which European feudal society arose from.

It guided the formation of new society and created its ideal image, a conception of the world substantiating rules and institutions holding and allowing new society's life. In those times, there belonged to Church leaders and institutions that organized and directed new society's activity in every field. All the society was Christian because Christianity assumed, as Roman Church, forms corresponding and adequate to the practical conditions of those times in Europe, without be careful of the continuity with doctrines, morals, rites and organizational structure of Christians when they were fighting against Roman Empire. In its afterworld, the Church associated the idealized figures of feudal lords to the martyrs of heroic period of its achievement within the Empire, and of the persecutions facing which Christians multiplied themselves. It exalted qualities, values, and feelings constituting and founding the feudal society as Christian virtues by God dictated and keys to enter in Paradise. It even forgot its Judaic origins and launched anathemas against Judeans whose presence disturbed feudal society.

So, by its nature Roman Church is an institution of European feudal world. Serfs, hierarchic scale of feudal masters, princes and kings of that world, its penalties, rewards, punishments, torments and joys, values and relations reflected themselves idealized in an afterlife world the Roman Church administrates, in its conception of the world. Ceased on earth, European Middle Age world has continued and continues to exist, suspended in heavens of Church's doctrine, and from there continues to torment men and women, from their earliest youth in nursery schools. Church tries to impose rules, relationships, values, even paraments, language, music, ceremonies of that world to men and women calling themselves Christian in a quite different world, and also to other, as long as it can. Because of quite precise reasons that we'll see further, it survived in a changed world where it, however, has a practical and quite relevant role. In this different world it

presents itself by forms (world conception, moral principles, customs, rites, formulas, paraments, cult buildings, organizational characteristics, etc.) that are mediations between the ones of its Golden Age and the necessities the new times and adverse turned up conditions impose. Since centuries by now, in order to survive, it must limit itself, carve out its role, run after the world that's escaping and, on the other hand, redefine what was irremissible, stiffen, modernize and defend itself. The timid innovations of Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) are still causing scandal and provoking rejections. That Council expressed the influence of first wave of proletarian revolution over ecclesiastic structure itself. It was an attempt to adapt itself to world evolution, in order to survive. However, some thought it was only the beginning of a deeper transformation that would have brought to the dissolution of the ecclesiastic multinational headed by Vatican. Others thought that it already was an adventurous concession, beyond the maximum that could be allowed. However, both the pretences to modernize and the quarrels about what can be allowed and what must be strictly defended, confirm the role by now subordinate of Roman Church: it isn't it that leads the dance, but it conform itself to rhythms by other dictated, even if with own figures. In the imaginary universe built according to the European feudal society's structures, Roman Pope continues to consider himself and want to be worshipped as God on the earth (as, besides, many other sovereigns pretended "by divine right" and some, as Japan's emperor and Nepal's king, pretend still today), and king of kings, the earthly center superior to all powers because is charged with administration of power over souls, that are of quality superior to the bodies over which States Authorities exercise their power.

In real universe, Roman Popes get the top of their power in Sixteenth Century, when Rome and Italian peninsula were at centre of European civilization for the second time. However, ever since some centuries Roman Church had ceased to be the propulsive and animating force of European civilization. Since some centuries it was contrasting the new forces rising from within European Christian society: the forces of Communes, Maritime Republics, merchants, bankers, Hanseatic League, new laic intellectuals. Little by little, these founded customs, behaviors, relations and release ideas that were no more Roman Church's ones, even if they didn't yet rebel to it. Little by little, individuals and their traffics went to occupy the centre of attention and solicit reflection. Then, with its conception still completely religious, Luther subverted the hierarchic Church, reduced clergy's role and put every individual in direct relation with God. In reality, it was only of use for some classes' individuals, but the mass was obliged to share its prince's religion by the quite material and bloody struggle itself, that Roman Church carried out. The clergy's mediation at Pope's orders was taken away. It was a quite earthly mediation and able to do completely corporal coercions (directly or by secular Authority's arm). Without it, in reality the individual founded himself in relation with the product of his fantasy, that is concretely with himself, his consciousness and his flesh, and with other individuals. Ideologically, we were already in bourgeois world and Papacy was in full decay.

As every power, it was born owing to the work of men who needed it for their social life. It had a progressive and propulsive role until it corresponded to those needs. When it didn't correspond to them anymore, having saved itself from adverse forces' attempts to suppress it violently and bluntly, it succeeded in remaining some time more and assuming new roles, thanks to the force it had concentrated in its hands before and to the habitude meanwhile established among its subjects. But its fate is sealed. It's more and more little the number of men, and especially the most socially active ones, who find in it their direction or source or moral (ideological) comfort of their activity's force and their work. It has become a brake and an obstacle to society's development. This occurs despite Papacy's opposition, so periodically it has to adapt itself through crisis, shakes and up settings. Since about Twelfth century, Roman Church had lived in the role of old patriarch, who the new generations need, some even still rely on and everybody declare fidelity and pay homage to, who still holds the power accumulated in the past, but is by now an obstacle to the innovations that

press, impose themselves and will explode at his death or will kill him, in order to freely establish themselves at last.

The greatest dissociation and contrast between Roman Church and the living forces of new society that was forming in Europe, the bourgeoisie, took place in Nineteenth century. Then, the Papacy lost also its particular territorial base and autonomous and exclusive source of men and taxes: the Papal States. By its luck, it lost it in 1870, for “royal conquest”: the king of Italy invaded Lazio and Rome. It didn’t lose it overwhelmed by its subjects’ insurrection has happened in some measure in 1848. Just this loss and the way it happened created the conditions for an important turn in Papacy’s history and its temporary rebirth with a new role.

Above all others, Pius IX (Giovanni Maria Mastai Ferretti, 1792-1846-1878) is the Pope of utmost decay and retreating in defence of the old role: dogma of Immaculate Conception (1854), Syllabus (1864), First Vatican Council (December 1869 – September 1870), dogma of papal infallibility.

Above all others, Leo XIII (Vincenzo Gioacchino Pecci, 1810-1878-1903) is the Pope of the turn, of acceptance, definition and assumption of Roman Church’s new role in the world. It met a bourgeoisie’s practical and urgent need, accepts bourgeoisie’s offer to gather Papacy’s remnants forces and thanks to them, became prop and shield of bourgeoisie’s dominion against the rising Communist movement. It accepted to use its residual influence over women, peasants and a part of urban workers against the rising Communist movement, to put its skilled experience of men, power and education at bourgeois society’s service against the rising Communist movement.

In exchange of it, of course the bourgeoisie didn’t submit itself to Church spiritually nor still less in political and economical field: in customs, behaviours, laws, social relations, international relations, etc. It was not possible to go back to Middle Age. The Church’s social doctrine, consecrated in the most quoted, applauded and unapplied encyclical *Rerum novarum* (1891), remained a lark-mirror – as the progressive Constitutions “nearly socialist” that imperialist bourgeoisie signed in Italy, France and elsewhere after the Second World War. However, by law and even more in practice (in the behaviour of political Authorities and bourgeois: the civil society’s authorities), the imperialist bourgeoisie largely gave the Roman Church financial and power means: welfare institutions, schools hospitals, privileges and exemptions, immunities and protection, commitment to create a favourable public opinion (history manipulation to delete or diminish Church’s complicity with Nazi-fascism and similar regimes, concealment of clergy’s financial and sexual crimes, etc.). Bourgeoisie is an exploiting class: the Church had only to adapt old feudal forms of its dominion and exploitation to the ones of bourgeoisie, that was by then in the imperialist phase of its life. The Church was mainly land and estate owner; and it became mainly financial operator and speculator, banker, insurer, estate speculator: a transformation did by Sicilian Mafia only a hundred years after. The Church became holder of properties and private initiative among the others, but with the advantages given by its experience, size, national and international centralization, habitude to secrecy, wideness and variety of its relations and activities, force of persuasion given by confessional and administration of divine curses and blessings, the not or not mainly wage bond with functionaries and dependants, its priests, friars and nuns’ celibacy, the exemption from work codes, social contributions and taxes on properties and incomes, exemption from military service, its state prerogatives, etc. The Concordat became the model contract of the new relation established between Roman Church and bourgeois States’ Authorities. The State limits its sovereignty and recognizes to Vatican a kind of sovereignty over people and goods sited in State’s territory. It’s no more the form of Middle Age over national sovereignty when the Pope excommunicated emperors or kings, so releasing their subjects from divine obligation of fidelity. It’s neither the one that followed the Middle Age sovereignty with the constitution of semi-bourgeois absolute monarchies. It’s a modernized derivation made to measure of the new

compromise. In exchange the Pope ensures ecclesiastic hierarchy's and believers' cooperation with established power, on the base of vows and moral commitments which however the Pope can release every its believer from any time it suits it. The new role the Church has assumed is a primarily important and exemplary aspect of the compromise with old regime's classes and institutions (monarchies, nobility, civil and military bureaucracy, magistracy, etc.) by which the bourgeoisie head long closed its revolutionary phase in all the European countries, in front of Communist movement's threat. Then it assembled all old regimes' classes and institutions to collaborate in defending ruling classes' property and privileges against rising Communist movement. In fact, then in the main European countries and in Northern America there were been created socialist revolution's objective and subjective conditions. We are in the imperialist era, the era of capitalism's decay, of proletarian revolution and preventive counter-revolution.

Since then Roman Church more and more clearly became a bourgeois world's important and sure bulwark against Communist movement, even being in continuous and secondary contrast with bourgeois world because it doesn't belong to it, but, owing to its conception of the world, morals and organization, remains a feudal world's remnant adopted by bourgeoisie and somehow adapted to it.

In the light of this Church's new role, there are understandable both its bond and complicity with Fascism, Nazism, every anti-Communist regime, "bourgeois democracies", American imperialism, and its differentiation from every one of these regimes. Roman Church supports them, but stays autonomous. It negotiates compensations, pretends respect of its privilege and breaks away from it when thinks that the regime is by then condemned. Similarly there are understandable its irreducible struggle against Communist movement and, all in all, its outstanding capability to recognize and exploit all its limits and mistakes, skilfully enlarging every contrast and contradiction, with no scruple or prejudice. This capability found a large field of action when the Communist movement felt under modern revisionists' direction. Then the Communist movement ceased to be an irresistible enemy, able to exert its influence and attractive force not only over the "herd of believers" that Church shears and let shear by the imperialist bourgeoisie with no mercy, but also over the body of "shepherds". On the contrary, the Communist movement became a laughingstock that Church checked on every field: it obtained endless concessions and privileges and contemporarily directed fomentation and opposition. It get the top in the Seventies, in Poland, when just itself became promoter and direction of an important part of the working class against the modern revisionists' regime, and then abandoned workers into capitalists' clutches after that they did it the favour to dismantle what was remaining of socialism.

We mentioned Communist movement's influence over "believers' herd" and even over "shepherds" of Roman Church, that is over the believers' mass – who, of course, beyond and before being believers, are members of the respective social classes – and even on the body of "Church's functionaries – who are recruited from different social classes and individually and collectively undergo classes and social movements' influence, everyone of them has an intellectual and moral development, etc.

In reality, this Church, today presenting itself (and presented by bourgeoisie and its bootlickers) shining of glory and invincible, in the just ended century passed through moments of panic, when Communist movement's ascent seemed unstoppable also to its chiefs and even prominent exponents built bridges or simply individually gave up, taking direction towards the Communist movement itself. Several times Vatican's chiefs set up or updated project to transfer the world centre of their activity elsewhere, out of the peninsula. Not only the workers didn't follow anymore their directives and reacted as they hoped to their calls, threats and excommunications. Even important sectors of Vatican's functionaries were oscillating or collaborated with Communist movement. Modernism was the expression of this kind of movement in functionaries' body at the beginning of latest

century. Theology of Liberation had the same meaning, after the Second World War. The Second Vatican Council belongs to the same kind of phenomena.

The lesson drawn is that the Communist movement's advancement not only can defeat Church from outside, but it also sows panic, mistrust and desperation within it. On the contrary, the line of giving way and conciliation with imperialist bourgeoisie launched and practiced by modern revisionists strengthens the right wing also in the body of Church's functionaries. Finally, comparing the relation of forces between Communist movement and Vatican at the beginning of latest century and now, it must be mentioned that the result is largely in favour of Communist movement, even if it is at a bottom of a very deep crisis.

During the first wave of proletarian revolution imperialist bourgeoisie, and Church with it, experienced to turn to Fascism and Nazism for defending its positions: it has been a disastrous experience both for imperialist bourgeoisie and for Church. The working class and popular masses paid most dearly for it, but imperialist bourgeoisie risked that even European imperialist countries could become socialist. Probably this could have marked the final victory of socialist revolution in the world. The imperialist bourgeoisie is unlikely to give again the direction of struggle against Communist movement to movements similar to those who had it during the first wave. It's likely that it call the Church instead, to carry out a prominent role to brake and obstacle Communist movement's rebirth, and that the Church will be called to head popular masses' reactionary mobilization of whom it needs to face the proceeding of new general crisis of capitalism. Surely, already now Church is exploiting on a large scale the fear that imperialist bourgeoisie's conduct gives rise to among popular masses, in order to widen its influence. Even if this will be the way that imperialist bourgeoisie and Church will choose, it will not save one or the other from their end.

The Communist movement is surely able to carry Church and imperialist bourgeoisie through. Neither Roman Church nor imperialist bourgeoisie are able to solve the problems the life today put in front of humanity. These don't request a different treatment of popular masses by ruling classes. If it were so, sooner or later, under one or the other flag, the ruling class would adopt it. All the practical questions the life today put in front of humanity can be solved. The humanity surely can take again the way of civil progress indicated by the general lines of the course it have followed in the millenniums that we know. However, in order to be solved they request a general and capillary advancement of popular masses in political and cultural field until a mass assumption of a role excluding every ruling class, in the relations with the rest of nature and with their own social and individual line: Therefore, it requests to end humanity's division in classes of exploited and exploiters, division between people who know and who don't know, between people done for ruling and other done for obeying, between people educated to direct and people educated to execute, to passivity, precariousness and marginalization. By its nature imperialist bourgeoisie isn't able to lead popular masses to this outcome. Even less Church and Vatican are able to do it. On the contrary, the working class is able to do it and this is also the only way by which it can put an end to its subordination to bourgeoisie. It's the way on which the conscious and organized Communist movement and, in the first rank, Communist parties guide the working class. Paraphrasing Gramsci we shall say: "Also in this field the Communist movement's position is opposed to Church's one. The Communist movement doesn't tend to maintain popular masses in primitive philosophy of the common sense. On the contrary, it tends to lead them to a higher conception of life: if it affirms that intellectuals must connect themselves to popular masses, is not to limit scientific activity and maintain unity at present low intellectual and moral level in which all past story has relegated the popular masses. It is for building an intellectual and moral block which could create the necessary political conditions for an intellectual and moral progress of masses, and not only the progress of narrow groups of intellectuals." (A. Gramsci, Text 12, Notebook 11. pp. 1384-1385, Einaudi 2001, op. cit.)

3. *Vatican and Catholic Church in Italy*

As we said above, in Europe and all over the world Vatican and Church have had a role, firstly to prevent and restrain the development of capitalist mode of production and connected social relations and culture, then, since the beginning of imperialist era of capitalism, to support bourgeoisie and contrast Communist movement, revolutions of New Democracy and socialist revolutions. In Italy, this role was carried out in such a concentrated way to determine a new and specifically Italian quality of the phenomenon. One of our country specific characteristics, that distinguish it from any other country, even European ones, is the role that Vatican and its Church have had and continue to have in its life. The Vatican has centre in Italy. Italy is the country where greatest are density and strength of its spider's web. It's the decisive territory of its world functioning, where Vatican defends its power and privileges more rabidly, where, thanks to history we have behind, it maintained means to defend them more effectively and exercise them more strongly.

In other countries where Roman Church has its forces, it is one of the many, picturesque and poisonous remnants the imperialist bourgeoisie retrieved from past: kings with their courts and their "civil lists", nobiliary orders, career magistrates, orders of chivalry, castes and cliques of career officials with their "codes of honour" and with their team complicities, professional orders and their monopolies, Higher Chambers (senates), State revenues (a crowd of rich parasites weighing on Public Administrations' balances and feeding secrecy and parasitism in the entire society), secret societies, etc. In every country the evil work and miasmas of this historical remnants confound themselves with those of bourgeois society's putrefaction. One century and a half ago, bourgeoisie ended its revolutionary epoch and its progressive role and recruited as allies against Communist movement all leftover rubbish of pre-bourgeois world. Confronting "old Europe" with USA, which as well is a country completely of European origin, we can better take in account this phenomenon. Today, USA are the world centre of the struggle the bourgeois world opposed to Communist movement's advance, are whole world's policeman. This country conquered this sad primacy and carries out this foul role just because here bourgeoisie found less historical leftovers to strengthen its defences. Therefore it developed and develops its peculiar characteristics and potentialities, for good or ill, in a most pure and concentrated form. On the contrary, in "old Europe" the invalid found a convenient crutch in the rubbish leftover from history, but the crutch took the invalid's will to walk with its legs, so engraving his invalidity.

In the combination of imperialist bourgeoisie with its allied historical leftovers, in Italy the Vatican has such a weight to give rise to the particular nature of our country in contemporary era, also compared with other European countries. There is a lot of lamentation about our country's anomalies and delays, about its ruling class, Public Administration, judiciary system, school system, customs, culture, and so on. Its springs up, from the reviews of those subjective forces for socialist revolution that do not limit themselves to mock the claiming struggles, but also look after the analysis of situation (for instance *Contropiano*, review of Communists' Network) all the way up to bourgeois media as *Repubblica*, *Corriere della Sera*, and *Micromega*. What this people do not say is the historical origin and present reason of "Italian anomalies" which they talk and mourn about. By refusing to look after therapy, Italian bourgeoisie and all those who are submitted to its influence has finished by no more be able even to diagnose the ill: they limit themselves to moan about symptoms. As far as I know, in order to find in our country a lucid and clear indication about origin of "Italian anomalies", we have to go back up to Antonio Gramsci's work.

Vatican and Church have had a decisive role in our country's history (and in its manipulation too), and they have it also now. Obviously, they have it not only in a negative way, but also in what is a pride for our country. Every time somebody, as a defeatist, throws in our discussions racial, geographic or any way "natural" explanations of "Italian anomalies", we must remember the universal role our country carried out in the Renaissance and the huge vanguard cultural and artistic it gave the world in every field until all the sixteenth century. The Roman Church was the collective

organic intellectual of Middle Age Europe and of European feudal society. Within this society there are born the capitalist mode of production and the bourgeois society grown around it that gave the entire world its form and still today gives it. The origins of “Italian anomalies” are in our history. Also it’s again confirmed that “man is the product of his history”. On the negative point of view, Vatican and its Church

- between Eleventh and Fifteenth Centuries strongly contrasted the endogenous and founded on its own force development of bourgeois world that was in action in our peninsula;
- during the same period they prevented the formation of a wide State in the peninsula, like absolute monarchies that were formed in rest of Europe;
- in Sixteenth Century they ended bourgeois development that was on and made decay our country reducing it to a territory subjected to foreign dominion for three centuries;
- between half of Eighteenth Century and half of the Nineteenth Century, when bourgeois development started again, this time on tow and in the rear of the rest of Europe, in the Risorgimento they made prevail Moderates and counter opposed the movement for independence and unity to the peasant movement and the agrarian revolution, a course of things whose consequences weighted on a hundred and thirty years of our country’s unitary history and still weight today in the condition of the current struggle between working class and imperialist bourgeoisie.

1. It was the Roman Church itself that, operating as centre of Middle Age Europe, without understanding it, since the Lower Middle Ages, around the times of Charlemagne (742 – 800 – 814) gave thousands impulses to mercantile economy and monetary relations’ development, to the break of isolation of economy of court and feud, to international relations, to expeditions for conquering new territories and richness, to scientific knowledge. Italian peninsula was the centre of these impulses. It was the country where the capitalist mode of production reached such a development it never reached before in humanity’s history. This materialized in the constitution of Communes and Maritime Republics and had its driving power in commercial capitalists, the merchants.

As new economic relations developed, and with them the connected ideas, customs, feelings and values, it was more and more largely and clearly realized that a new world was rising, inconsistent with the old one. It was not something that would have continued to live near old feudal world, in its periodic fairs, at its service, as its complement, enrichment and embellishment. If it had not been suffocated in time, new bourgeois world would have ousted old feudal world. Then, gradually a deadly struggle stirred up between two worlds. The old Middle Age struggle for feudal investitures became the struggle between the laic authorities and Papacy’s and Church’s power. Very early the Papacy with its Church headed the old world struggling to survive. For clear reasons the clash between two worlds was fought in peninsula more rabidly, with more forces and fierceness than in rest of Europe. In fact, in the peninsula the greatest institution, the intellectual and moral centre of European feudal society had its centre. The wars raging in peninsula for seven centuries, since Eleventh to Sixteenth Century, so as political and cultural conflicts, were founded on it. The outcome of conflict was not taken for granted. On the contrary, Papacy passed through a period of great precariousness, since 1309 to 1423, first with transfer of its centre to Avignon, in France, and then with the Great Western Schism.

2. Vatican was the decisive impediment to constitute a great state unity in peninsula, in the age when, in rest of Europe even if generally socially less advanced than Italy, national absolute monarchies were formed. They were determinant factors for further bourgeois society’s development. Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) joined the struggles of that age and examined them thoroughly. He concluded that Vatican was the main impediment to create a wide absolute

monarchy in the peninsula. On one side at that time it was almost unthinkable to form such a monarchy eliminating Papacy, owing to its power in rest of Europe and general state of things. On the other side, other Christian powers would have tried by all means to prevent that Pope could combine its intellectual and moral sovereignty upon their subjects with possession of the forces a great State owns. Surely, Machiavelli's conclusions well reflect the real outline of opposing forces at that time. But it's also true that, as far as they were concerned, the Popes energetically and effectively struggled to prevent that others could unite the peninsula against them. On the contrary, they did never struggle with energy and tenacity to unify it at their orders in form of absolute monarchy, the most modern form of that age. It's easy to understand why they didn't search such a solution. The Papacy embodied the unity of feudal society, fractioned and scattered as it was. If he headed a great State instead, it would have not only increased contrasts between Papacy and absolute monarchies of rest of Europe, contrasts that, anyway, scattered all that period. But, furthermore, Pope should have to face claims and revolts of an important population, whose consent would be decisive for Papacy's survival. In other words, Pope would have risked coming to the end of Charles the First, king of England, or Louis the Sixteenth, king of France. So, Papacy would have risked coming to French dynasty's end, and probably faster than it, owing to most advanced development of capitalism in the peninsula and its populations' fighting aptitude. Already in those times Vatican had better and ought to rule behind the scenes, through third persons, not to directly appear and take government responsibilities.

3. The end of struggles till now reminded was that in Sixteenth Century Papacy, heading Italian and European force of feudal reaction, succeeded in defeating Reformation and with it bourgeois forces of rising capitalism all over the peninsula. The peninsula felt even under control of other European powers (France, Spain, Austria) for three centuries. With Counter reformation, the Roman Church skilfully profited to repress and eliminate its opponents and impose moral and intellectual conformism by detaching in ideas and customs that during the Renaissance had been created between mercantile and intellectual (in short, bourgeois) élite and the mass of population, particularly of peasants and generally of women. Since then Church has been populist. Catholic countries' great intellectuals and bourgeois élite were obliged to maintain a tie with the mass of population, directly but most of all indirectly, through personal outward homage to the rites of popular religion and lower clergy. Even if they thought differently, and privately acted differently, publicly they had to show devotion and homage to the religion Church gave to population **(12)**.

The Church prevented population to get out from superstition inherited by Middle Age, the popular faith that Renaissance didn't seriously undermined, and from a conception of the world contrasting with society and knowledge's evolution and therefore becoming more and more wonder – working, fatalist, fanatical and primitive. It was what Church and ruling class believed necessary to prevent population from dreaming to get out and committing itself to get out from its miserable economic and social condition. In order to get it there wasn't enough repression and widespread activity of lower clergy (countryside priest and monastery friars). It was also necessary that the élite would limit or hide its behaviours and ideas and help clergy to establish an active management of ideas and feelings of women and popular classes, particularly of peasants **(13)**. The higher clergy undertook direction of the whole, as an activity under its monopoly. The Holy Office of Roman Curia was the central direction of this activity, with its refined doctrine and its stakes for heretics and witches.

Clergy had the monopoly upon children's' education, different according to the class they belong to. It also had monopoly of spiritual direction upon women and hegemony upon peasants. It had many weapons at its disposal. Particularly it had the confessional for knowing behaviours, trends, thoughts and for morally persecuting transgressions, the threat of pains of hell and promises of delights of heaven after death, God's curse or blessing or its saints and angels in this earthly life, excommunication (exclusion from the rites) and ban from social life. The *Catechism* (published in

1566) became synthesis of the conception of the world and ethics, which everybody had to pay homage to, but it was a real chain for mind and heart of “common people” exploited, manipulated and despised by prelates.

In countries left under Pope’s authority, Church established a new social regime of strict control of population’s behaviours and consciousnesses with Counter Reformation: it was a regime with political power as military and coercive instrument and the regular and secular (diocesan) clergy as spiritual, intellectual and moral guide and as general bonding agent. An intellectual, moral and political gloomy burden went down above all the countries remained Catholic (papist) and, in the end, determined their decay in international relations: This burden overwhelmed Italian peninsula more than the other countries.

The populations of our country entered in a long period of stagnation, regress and decay in every field. In economic field, the separation of manufacturing activity from agriculture and connected development of industry as an economic and separate sector stopped. In scientific, cultural and moral field the researches in technical field were tolerated but any development in the field of human science was prohibited, persecuted and discouraged: the vicissitudes of Giordano Bruno (1548 – 1600) and Galileo Galilei (1564 – 1642) are exemplary. Hagiography and academic rhetoric characterize the epoch (14). This catastrophe marked our country’s following history and still marks it.

The development of the new mode of production (the capitalism) was stopped everywhere, but Counter Reformation was not able to restore feudal world. Its destruction had gone on too much and it was no more reversible. It happens instead that many bourgeois people (merchants, bankers, industrials, professional men and intellectuals), prevented or deterred from widening on a large scale their capitalist business and traffics, totally or partly abandoned them and transferred part of their interests buying landed properties in exchange of money that old owners (of feudal origin) wasted in the cities or abroad. On the other side a great number of feudal families had been ruined or degenerated by long wars, rising of “free companies”, serfs’ escape, expeditions. The new States’ armed forces constituted in the peninsula were no more founded on feudal performances, but on mercenary troops. Then new social relations prevailed in countryside and between countryside and cities of the peninsula. In countryside, with their own implements and traditional methods, peasants were producing more agricultural provisions than those owners, Authorities and clergy left them for their miserable subsistence. Those provisions were expropriated by their oppressors (landlords, Authorities, clergy). Peasants were deterred or prevented from leaving the countryside and escaping in the city. In the new regime they could leave countryside only through the channels of recruitment by clergy or the call by Authorities or landlords (as soldiers, servants or unskilled labour in public services). Landlords, Authorities and clergy (except countryside priests and part of monastery friars) maintained their residence in the cities (15). There they made work at their service a numerous urban population of servants, clerks, public service employees, policemen, soldiers, sluggards, prostitutes and craftsmen that they paid with money. They also sold them this part of provisions they didn’t use or export in exchange of money. So, city economy remained a monetary economy very wide, rich and bright, so that the new regime kept and even developed the Renaissance acquisitions. But city didn’t sell anything to peasants: it weighed as a one big parasitic body upon peasants and it sucked souls out of them as well. Their economy was not monetary, but natural. More than before, city and countryside became separated worlds, united only by the exploitation the landlords, Authorities and Church exerted upon peasants.

Landlords were no more feudal lords. Property of land was no more connected with the political role that feudatory exerted in its feud. The political subdivision of peninsula was no more that of Middle Age, even if names and titles of former feuds were the same. Small as they were, each one of the little States in which the peninsula was divided was like absolute monarchies of rest of Europe, with its bureaucracy and mercenaries who accomplished political roles before exerted by feud owners, with its multicoloured local autonomies and their customs duties, its local mercenary

forces, and so on. Even better, at the beginning the States of the peninsula were socially more advanced than the rest of Europe. The monetary economy dominated in cities and international relations and any way at a wide range. Juridically, new landowners were private citizens who bought or sold the land they owned. But peasants remained excluded from commercial and monetary relations. Personal performances and quantity of provisions they owed to owners, Authorities and clergy were fixed by customary rules, different among them, according to zone and master's will. The relations were customary, not monetary or matter to contract for. They were relations of personal dependence where master's will, ratified by clergy (if they weren't the same person), merged with God's will and was safeguarded by Authorities. The clergy was depositary and administrator of God's will, interpreter of "natural order" of things, voice of the truth and source of moral rules.

The Church strengthened its power both as a great owner of largely inalienable lands and as cultural and moral bonding agent of new class composition. Counter Reformation's burden of gloom descended on entire society, with censorship, Inquisition, Index of Prohibited Books, clergy's control upon consciousness and customs through the confessional, decay of publishing, persecution of dissidents and irregulars, torture, stakes for witches and heretics, clergy's monopoly upon culture. The clergy had monopoly upon care of peasants and women's mind, feelings and customs, upon children's education and culture in general.

Peasants were isolated from city workers. The bourgeois or anyway the well - to - do people of city and the landowners largely became social figures united in the same person with connected moral and intellectual doubleness.

Counter Reformation gave the Pope and its Church a body of functionaries (the clergy) more selected, homogeneous for conception of the world (doctrine) and moral precepts, more centralized and with a better defined hierarchic structure, more disciplined, with a better formation systematically cared in special schools (Seminars for diocesan clergy), closely bound to celibacy. In conclusion, it was a party in the modern sense. But he didn't form as a vanguard reunited on the task of a social promotion of a class. It formed in order to restructure a traditional force by its traditional command, which made use of traditional authorities, and means it had for doing it. It was as a restructuring of a defeated army by its command in order to get a new army able to fight, as the restructuring of a country by its State in order to give it new life, as were the reforms many "enlightened" sovereigns did in Europe in Eighteenth Century. The Order of Jesuits, founded by Ignacio de Loyola (1491 – 1556) was the sample department of general restructuring that Pope carried out in his clergy.

Hegemony upon peasants, children's education, and spiritual direction of women, social functions that Church monopolized, gave it an unlimited field of recruitment of its clergy. On the other side, for peasant children to enlist in clergy became a way of social promotion and alleviation of economical and social condition for their families. Clergy's social role and prestige made ecclesiastic career a coveted and profitable outlet for urban family as well.

In conclusion, in Catholic countries Counter Reformation created a modern international party at Pope's disposal. It was constituted by territorial troops (diocesan or secular clergy), by specialized mobile corps (order and congregations: the regular clergy), by auxiliary mobile female corps (sisters congregations), and by a staff constituted by Roman Curia, its emissaries and higher degree prelates. Only between 1789 and 1848, when with French and European revolution this system of keeping clerical hegemony upon the masses failed and outburst, Vatican changed over to unite in particular organizations also the part of the masses that was remaining loyal to it (Catholic Action, other diocesan organization of laics and finally laic orders) for preserving them from contagion, for using it to exercise the old power and, if possible, to drive back to obedience the rest of masses that slipped it. However, this will have large development only within the new role that Roman Church and Vatican will assume in Italy and in rest of the world in imperialist era of capitalism. For speed

and wideness, decay of Catholic countries' international role was proportional to how much strictly Counter Reformation imposed themselves within them. On the whole, in Europe the peninsula had the worst destiny, even if different in various zones thanks to political subdivision.

4. In class structure established by Counter Reformation in peninsula there were premises for preventing the struggle for independence and unity to become also a movement for agrarian revolution, the bourgeois revolution of peasants. Because of its commercial and cultural relations urban bourgeoisie was the part of population that more felt need and advantages of independence and elimination of political subdivision and frontiers of little States, which the peninsula was divided in, within a Europe formed by great national States. However, because of its relations with peasants this same bourgeoisie was absolutely contrary to a peasant revolution: it would be the target of bourgeois revolution in the countryside. This united it to clergy that was the real warrantor and bearing pillar of its dominion upon peasants thanks to its intellectual and moral hegemony. Without religion and clergy administrating it, it will remain nothing but the permanent resort to repression and terror in order to hold peasants at bay. So, during all Risorgimento, which is since about half of Eighteenth Century to 1870, clergy continued to intellectually and morally direct peasants, women and children. The male urban population, particularly the well – to – do people, got divided in believers and unbelievers. But also unbelievers supported clergy, Church and Pope, in order to safeguard social order. So the struggle for independence and unity of the peninsula, which in the decade 1859 – 1870 led to constitute the Reign of Italy, was headed by urban bourgeoisie, Catholic or not. However, this bourgeoisie was dragged in this enterprise by the general evolution of Europe with which it had deep traditional connections on economical and cultural field. That is why Italian Risorgimento has been called “passive revolution”. The Moderates were promoters of this political orientation: to change the political arrangement of the peninsula without changing its social structure, to impose the necessary modernizations to Church in order to avoid the radicalization of social fight, and to safeguard its social role.

Peasants were always the overwhelming majority of population, but the struggle for unity and independence was carried out also against them. Several times, Austrian imperial government and Pope threatened to unchain peasants against liberals, promoters of unity and independence, through decrees of land confiscation in favour of peasants and excommunications. However, they were vain threads, because both of them had more to lose by an agrarian revolution in the peninsula than by liberals' victory. Anyway, there grew the liberals' fears and the panic they already had facing peasants movements.

In fact, all peasants movements of Risorgimento (in 1769, 1799, 1808, 1821, 1848, 1860) had ownership of land and, generally, agrarian relations as principal object and motive (16). But the anti unitary and anti bourgeois groups headed and defined their political targets. Obviously, those groups didn't have will or capability to lead an agrarian revolution that necessarily had to be a bourgeois revolution: it would have eliminated relations of personal dependence in countryside and established mercantile and capitalist relations, starting from confiscation of lands in favour of peasants. Consequently, peasant movements found themselves at odds openly and bloodily with the political forces really bourgeois, promoters of unity and independence, and were defeated. The war of “Brigandage”, that lasted almost two decades starting from 1860, was the peasant movement territorially more widespread (it concerned the entire continental South) and lasting. The army of new Italy and the National Guard had more fallen than in all the three wars of independence (1848-1849, 1859-1860, 1866). The fallen on peasants' side were many more, but they weren't even registered. The unitary State continued for decades to consider every peasant protest as a threat to unity and independence of country (an “outrage to constitution of Italy”) and savagely repressed it. So it happened in 1878 for peasant demonstration of Mount Amiata where soldiers killed Davide Lazzaretti in cold blood. Still in 1893, at the time of Sicilian Fasces, Prime Minister Crispi and his fellows accused peasants of anti unitary aims and repressed them savagely. In this context in

western Sicily, Mafia became consolidated as not regular force ensuring order on State's account and under its high supervision (17)

Fundamentally, the question if unify or not the peninsula, in which form and how was debated and resolved within the ambit of various Italian States' ruling classes with some involvement of urban working classes. In this context, it's obvious that Moderates (Historical Right Wing) would have the better of the promoters of republic and of a "democratic revolution" which, without agrarian revolution, was a groundless and weak proposal (18)

Pope and Church were officially contrary to unification of the peninsula, but in reality Church was very divided. The Moderates took advantage of general Papacy's weakening in Europe during the Eighteenth Century: owing to Enlightenment, to reforms introduced by "enlightened sovereigns" (among which the Emperor of Austria himself), to suppression of Company of Jesuits in many countries and finally to French Revolution and Napoleonic Empire. Particularly these latest events led a considerable part of popular masses to separate from religious conception of the world and from Church. Furthermore, in 1848 the Moderates definitively upset anti unitary clerical forces thanks to fatuous adhesion of Pius IX to liberalism and movement for independence and unity. That adhesion didn't last much, but was "enough to desegregate the Church's political – ideological apparatus and to lose faith in itself: it was the politic masterwork of Risorgimento and one of most important points of resolution of nodal points that until then prevented to concretely think to the possibility of an Italian unitary State" (A. Gramsci, Texts 3 and 24, *Notebook 19*, 1934-1935, p. 1867 and p. 2013, Einaudi 2001, op. cit.). It was a masterwork which neo – Guelph movement led the way: its leader, Vincenzo Gioberti (1801 -1852), became even Prime Minister of Piedmont between 1848 and 1849.

Finally, the Moderates monopolized and, as a matter of fact, made the Republicans of the Action Party work under their direction: Garibaldi, Mazzini, Crispi, etc. Without an agrarian revolution the Action Party had no possibility but to cooperate to the revolution directed by Moderates, consciously or not, willingly or not. As a matter of fact, the Historical Right Wing kept the direction also in 1876, when officially country's government was taken by the Left Wing. In fact, this one followed the general lines indicated by Historical Right Wing on all most important matters. Transformism (a kind of Great Coalition of that day) showed Left's subordination to Right also in terms of parliamentary combination.

Which were the consequences of Moderates' direction in Risorgimento and of anti – peasant character they gave it? Which changes it produced in country's classes and in their internal relations?

The Risorgimento wasn't directly a revolution in social relations. It was only a different political arrangement of the peninsula (its political unification) and a different insertion of it in political and economical European context. It extended to the entire country the regulations of internal policy that monarchy of Savoia had already introduced in its dominion. However, when unity was done, in order to consolidate and strengthen the outcomes of Risorgimento, the Moderates themselves had to start up a series of transformations and works (road and railway communication network, national school system, armed forces, industrial development, etc.) that put in crisis the productive relations. Land market had a great drive, land became a capital and its revenue compared to that of capitals invested in other sectors, relations in the countryside were more and more changed in mercantile and capitalist relations. The mass expulsion of peasants from agricultural work (with the following "overpopulation of the countryside"), recruiting of peasants for public works, emigration abroad, cities' industrial development and internal migrations changed country's class composition.

So, Italy's independence and unity started a process of social transformation that popular masses underwent. Not only they didn't promote it, but they were also prevented to understand its nature. Through up and downs and with not told tribulations and suffering, social relations in countryside and in the entire country became mainly bourgeois. As a matter of fact, everyone who, in Italian

Communist movement, talked of “completion of bourgeois revolution” and went to find the “feudal remnants” in order to support its line, even unintentionally stood against the only further transformation the Communist movement could and ought to carry out in our country: the socialist revolution (19).

We’ve already seen that class composition established in Italy by Counter Reformation excluded the condition for promotion and direction of an agrarian revolution by bourgeoisie: the establishment of bourgeois revolution in countryside with elimination of Church and other feudal remnants. Post – Unitarian developments definitively eliminated the conditions for a revolution of new democracy. The great internal migration after the end of the Second World War, from countryside to cities and from South to North, emptied the countryside and reduced peasants to a little part of country’s population. It doesn’t resolve the peasant problem: it eliminated the peasants.

In a broad outline, the effects of Moderates’ direction in Risorgimento were three:

- the feudal remnants established by Counter Reformation lasted for a long time and contaminated the most important political economical and cultural aspects of Italian bourgeois economic – social formation, characterizing it also after its disappearance;
- capitalism development was slow and hard, despite the favourable legacies of Renaissance: for a long time the mass of population suffered the torments of capitalism development and of its deficient development as well;
- the new State never affirmed its full and only sovereignty: it was created and still lasts a condition of plural or limited sovereignty.

1. The Church was the most beneficiary of moderate and anti – peasant character of Risorgimento. The Moderates didn’t carry out with energy and, given their nature, couldn’t carry out with success an activity to eliminate or at least reduce Church’s intellectual and moral hegemony upon peasants, women and a part of urban population. Bourgeoisie’s struggle for the intellectual renovation of country was limited to unconnected, often sectarian and elitist, private initiatives. There was almost no initiative on moral level, on the level of individual and social behaviour, to promote a moral adequate to the conditions of modern society. The bourgeoisie renounced to formulate and promote in terms of moral, of principles and rules for individual behaviour) the whole of social relations (of civil society) that its State protected with violence and expressed in juridical terms in its lawmaking. The little that bourgeoisie did with public school had limited effects because it concerned only schools frequented by a minority of the new generations: illiteracy, Church’s influence in lower schools especially in countryside and permanence of a widespread system of colleges and schools managed by clergy prolonged Church’s hegemony in new generations’ intellectual and moral formation. The State limited itself to form candidates of ruling class’ higher level: in order to even little be equal to their tasks they had to have an intellectual and moral formation different from the one it imposed to women and popular masses’ classes through the Church.

New State’s lawmaking and even more its application by Public Authority and Administration protected Church’s interests and supported its integration in new conditions of country’ richness. Church and its Roman “black nobility” transformed, on their conditions, their traditional land and real properties in new financial richness.

In Risorgimento and in following decades not only there completely lacked the mobilization of the masses to improve their conditions, education and the hygienic and sanitary conditions and all the other aspect of mass initiative that a peasant revolution and confidence in themselves would have developed in millions of people. On the contrary, Church, State and a great part of ruling class joined for mortifying, discouraging and repressing the practical initiative and, backward, intellectual

emancipation of men and women's mass. The emigration from countryside to city was systematically used for strengthening ecclesiastic hegemony also in cities: the parishes utilized their role of employment agencies to extend ecclesiastic control upon workers and other labourers of the city.

Furthermore, a lasting contraposition then began and after kept between population's mass and the Authorities. They presented themselves only or mainly with their carabinieri, tax collectors or bailiffs. This contraposition was aggravated by compulsory military service for an enemy State imposed after Unity, and by action of instigation and boycott promoted for a long time by Church and other anti – Unitarian groups whose social power (richness, prestige and often public offices) the Moderates entirely respected. Particularly, on one side Church got richness, privileges and power from State Authorities, and on the other assumed attitude of protector and spokesperson of popular masses in front of Authorities in a systematic position of blackmail.

Our country's unitary history is marked by this development in any aspect, in the South and in mountain zones of Centre and North more than elsewhere. Since the Risorgimento and on, it was the rising Communist movement with its leagues, mutual aid association, cooperatives, clubs, unions, trade union headquarters and its party which got the role of promoter of popular masses' practical initiative, of their emancipation from a superstitious and metaphysical conception of the world and of their emancipation from moral precepts coming from social conditions of old days. Little by little it formed a vanguard of workers who liberated themselves from the filth of the past supported by strength and prestige of State, Church and other ruling class' parallel organizations. These vanguards acted with limits, mistakes and hesitations, but also with tenacity, heroism and continuity. Instead of using their liberation for their own personal emancipation and career, they organized themselves to multiply their forces and spread more widely the intellectual and moral reformation necessary to build a Communist Italy.

2. In Italy, monetary economy was already much developed and monetary richness was abundant and concentrated when the Risorgimento began. However, it was only little used for capitalist investments. The *scarce availability of capitals for investments* is a mourn repeated all along our country's history after Unity and that bourgeois historians, clericals or not, complaisantly lavished in their history manuals. As a matter of fact, capitalist entrepreneurs and even State had to draw largely on banks of loan and investment and stranger Stock Exchanges for financing investments and Public Debt.

Just Moderates' direction prevented the creation of necessary political and class conditions for canalization of country's monetary richness towards country's economic and civil development, and for making fiscal taxation transparent, fairly prorated and equal to Public Administration' spending. Until the second post war period, landowners continued to squeeze incomes and personal performances they had squeezed until Unity out of peasants. Where have these incomes got? To a great extent, and Church is the most macroscopic instance, landowners weren't capitalist who invested in industrial enterprises what they squeezed out of peasants. They were parasites that continued to waste as they did before Unity, in the cities or abroad. The financial speculation, usury, land and estate speculation, financial investments abroad, treasuring, expenditures of rich people, Church, and Authorities for consumption, luxury, pomp, and entertainment and prestige expenses continued to absorb large part of country's monetary richness and working forces, so as rhetoric, theology and art of pettifogging continued to absorb large part of its intellectual energies.

The Church remained promoter centre and main source of ruling class' parasitism, which in 130 years of unitary history contaminated and still contaminates the entire country through thousands channels and capillaries, absorbs a great part of its productive forces, occupies great part of its working force and imposes its evil shadow and mark and lays down the law everywhere in the country. Not by chance in Italy charity, favours and alms are ever been and still now are in inverse proportion to popular masses' rights and salaries. It's the "benevolent conservatism": workers are on rich people's mercy, and the rich must not exaggerate – the feudal culture presented by Church

with its Sunday best wear! The protection money Mafia and other criminal organizations pretend, is just the specific form of this general state of parasitic exploitation (20). If it's true that in each capitalist country the consumption occurs in opposite way, it's founded on idlers' fantasy and vices, and not on producers' well being, this is so accentuated in Italy to create one of our country's specific qualities (misfortunes, maledictions, "anomalies"). The more rigid, old and anyway out of the concrete conditions are the morals officially taught and imposed by the Church, the more asocial, primitive and dissolute are the real practice and behaviour.

Coherently with Moderates' orientation, the new State assumed Public Debts and other charges and financial commitments of old State towards their exponents, directors, courtesans and agents. It lavishly compensated the damage they suffered by old States' suppression of, to buy their favour or mitigate their hostility, as it was best shown by the example of Pope and Church. This expenditures were added to those the new State had to do to create the condition of a modern and independent State, with the least bit of authority in European context (road and railway network, armed forces and police, school system, entertainment expenses, support to industrial and scientific development in the sectors basic for State independence, etc.). Furthermore they increased them: for instance, let's see the surplus of higher-grade officials and public dependents already in first years of the Reign. Instead of getting resource from the pockets of parasitism they found and drain them, Moderates widened Public Expenditure to finance and enlarge old parasitism that became a new scourge.

The inherited and new charges together hugely inflated Public Expenditure. Corresponding to it, the Moderates increased the taxes that in first decades principally weighed upon peasants. These ones and the compulsory military service increased their hostility towards the new State. So, a more favourable ground for manoeuvres and blackmails was created by anti Unitarian forces, first of all by Pope and Church, even if they were the most beneficiaries of Moderates' politics. The peasants' hostility, outcome of objective conditions and instigated by old Authorities and particularly by Church, made necessary further expenses for public order and national security (we've only to think at the war to "Brigandage").

The *narrowness of internal market* is another mourn repeated all along the entire history of our country after Unity and that bourgeois historian, clerical or not, complaisantly lavished in their treatises. Which did the source of such narrowness was?

Still for many decades after Unity peasants were the majority of population, and they were overloaded with old charges and new taxes beyond all limits. The total load was about doubled with Unity, according to reliable valuations (21). Peasants' condition was worsened by the fact that, at a certain point, in order to find funds, the State put up for auction the public and convent's lands, so suppressing the "civic uses" (pasture, forestage, etc.) that peasants enjoyed there from immemorial time. Until then the civic uses, together with convent meals, were sources from where the mass of peasants, particularly the poorest and even more in the worst years, brought them in enough to live on. So, given these conditions, it's obvious that peasants did not buy agricultural tools or capital goods for improving their work productivity or consumer goods. They were content with little and they try to produce that little directly, by themselves (natural economy). This was the first reason of narrowness of internal market.

In fact, the internal market was constituted by 1. capitalists' demand for investments and public expenditure for buying goods, 2. by capitalists and parasitic classes' demands for their consumption, 3. by urban families and workers' demand for consumer goods and tools, 4. by peasant families' demand for consumer goods and tools. The capital creates part of its market just breaking up from agriculture auxiliary and complementary activities (spinning, weaving, production of tools, building, manufacturing agricultural products, etc.) that within a natural economy peasant families do for themselves and their masters. The capital raises these activities to independent productive sectors of mercantile and capitalist economy, which sell their products each other and to peasant families (social division of work). This latter internal market's quota (peasant families'

demand) was important for Italian post Unitarian capitalism because the first two quotas largely resorted to most advanced European countries, owing to their nature and a long tradition. Furthermore the role of internal market increased by the fact that after completion of Unity of Italy began the Great Depression (1873 – 1895), with connected stagnation or even reduction of foreign market.

3. The new State never fully established its sole sovereignty upon the entire living population within its borders, even if this one had little or no local autonomy. It neither wanted to establish its sole sovereignty nor trusted to have force for doing it. In North and Centre of the country it took in its own account exertion of violence, repression and maintenance of public order and counted on Church that hold women and peasants at bay, upon which it exerted an effective intellectual and moral direction. This Church's direction upon peasants was less effective and strong in South. Here the State supported different social forces zone by zone, the ones that were able to keep peasants at bay, to dictate law and rule and make observe them. Obviously the State had to consent each one of those forces to dictate its own law and rules and to make it observe in its own way, even if within a limited, mobile and fluid acknowledgment of State's supremacy.(22)

The Church was the main cause and most beneficiary of new State's limited sovereignty as well. Already at completion of Unity, the Moderates recognized exemptions, immunities and extraterritoriality to Church and committed publicly themselves and by law to respect them. With Guarantee - Act (1871), the new State left to the Pope its authority (judicial, police, military, fiscal, etc.) upon a part of city of Rome (the Leonine city) and other buildings and lands in the surroundings. The State committed itself not to exert authority. In fact, its residents did not participate in the Plebiscite that approved annexation of Rome and Lazio to the Reign of Italy: we must remember that in 1789 the French Revolution confiscated the feud of Avignon and the surroundings, which had been Pope's seat for around a hundred years, with no compliments and compensations. The State also placed at unquestionable Pope's disposal, 50 millions of lire at year, more than the taxes the Pope drew from Papal States.(23).

As a matter of fact, the Church, headed by Pope, continued to work in the entire country as a sovereign power, a State in the State, with its network of functionaries covering the entire country starting from centre, until most remote villages, advantaged by the fact that now there were the new State's police, magistracy, penitentiary administration, operating in the peninsula, which made respect its interests, power, speculations and prestige and took responsibility about it. The functionaries were selected, formed, nominated and dismissed by Pope's unquestionable decision or of some superior functionaries (bishops) by him delegated for it. They enjoyed of revenues by diocesan and parish goods, of public building and other prerogatives and powers upon the population (baptisms, marriages, funerals, etc.). The new State was content with establishing that superior functionaries (the bishops) nominated by the Pope had to have State's approval (that never lacked, for tacit consent), in order to enjoy benefits, powers, immunities, warrants, protections and exemptions guaranteed by State Authorities.

On one side Church fomented antagonism and rebellion, on the other was becoming more and more exigent, threatening to do worse (in its international intrigues and instigation of peasants and women), levering on moral subjection and fear it aroused in the Court and the greatest part of ruling class' higher leaders. In fact, they were mostly pious people on which threats of excommunication, of torments of hell in afterlife tomorrow and of God's curses at once in the earth had a great effect. On the contrary, they, God and the Church had absolutely no problem to rip their fellows off. Thanks to this situation Church, Roman "black nobility", Pope's relatives and trustees and other exponents of Roman Curia on theirs or Church's own account shared in the "sack of Rome" (land and estate speculation) that took place in the decades after Unity, and in financial speculation which scandals since then on repeatedly upset the entire country's financial and bank system, until latest businesses Sindona (Italian Private Bank), Calvi (Ambrosian Bank), Parmalat, Fazio. These Church's activities have not only financial effects. They paralyze judicial system, which have to

stop every time it crashes into Church's exponents. They limit legislative power, which had to restrain itself every time provisions concern Church's interests that however are present in every field. They condition investigative apparatuses. They throw a shadow upon reliability of the entire Italian financial and State system. Obviously all the national and international adventurers interested to do it avail themselves of this situation.

The situation of double or limited sovereignty determined by Church contributed to maintain and create other sovereign powers in the country. Sicilian Mafia is the most famous (apart Church itself) among oldest ones. Starting as power as a matter of fact recognized and delegated by Italian State in Western Sicily, afterwards Mafia had widened its field of action in USA, Italy and other countries.

The present situation rises from this condition of limited sovereignty, which Italian State is in since its birth. Under Italian State's apparent formal sovereignty, in Italy there are territories and social relations where its law isn't in force. A series of sovereign powers, independent from Italian State, are operating. Every one of them dictates its own rules and has at its disposal its own means for imposing its will, as well as for exerting an extra legal influence on State Authorities and Public Administration. This is widely infiltrated by every one of the sovereign powers, which have at their disposal men who owe them their career and role in Public Administration and so act accordingly to directives of a power who doesn't officially takes any responsibility of the operations and behaviours carried out by the people it rules. Vatican is the main of these powers. In our country today there is no place or ambience where he couldn't gather information and exert its influence. In the country it has an influence much more scattered, effective and centralized than the State has. Furthermore, it can avail itself of a great part of State structure and Public Administration.

After Vatican there follow US imperialists, Zionists groups, Mafia, Camorra, 'Ndrangheta and other groups of organized criminality and any one who has will and means to take advantage of the situation. The vicissitudes of Masonic Lodge P2 showed a way to do it.

However, the double sovereignty State/Church has a particular character. Its history went through different phases.

1. The phase of armistice State/Church, resumed as for State in the Guarantee Act, as for Church in the line of *non expedit* (24). It lasted since about 1870 to 1898. State left to Church time and conditions to reorganize its forces in Italy and all around the world, but within the bourgeoisie the currents willing to promote an own direct hegemony upon the popular masses carried some weight; the separation between the bourgeoisie's left wing and the rising Communist movement wasn't yet sharp.

2. Through private agreements between authoritative exponents of two fields (as the Gentiloni pact), the bourgeoisie recognized as a matter of fact its need to maintain and strengthen Church's hegemony upon peasants and woman for holding workers and the rising connection workers – peasants at bay. This phase nearly lasted since workers – peasants' rising of 1893 – 1898 until 1928. The Catholics shared in parliamentary elections and activity in support of government. At a certain point, by clerical part itself, under papacy of Pius X (Giuseppe Sarto 1835 -1903 – 1914) was aired the idea to let women vote for facing Socialists' electoral advance. In 1918 the State starts again to officially set aside loans for Church.

3. Through Mussolini's mouth, bourgeoisie officially recognizes the Church particular sovereignty in exchange of its official and public commitment of fidelity towards State Authorities – on the base of a vow done to God that Church could release its functionaries from when it wanted to do it, while crimes against the State did by them were protected by immunities and anyway were invalidated by prescription. Lateran Treatise, Concordat and Financial Convention signed on 11th February 1929, opened this phase that lasted until 1943. The Church officially renounced to pretend old Papal States' restoration and in compensation of lost taxes had paid cash 750 millions of lire, a

milliard in bearer Treasury Bonds and an endless series of privileges, properties, rights, exemptions and immunities.

4. It's the phase of State's indirect subordination to Church through Christian Democracy, nearly lasting from 1947 to 1993. Italy became a new kind of enlarged Papal State. The Church was closely allied to US imperialism, which was present in Italy also directly, with its own forces. It directed country indirectly, through its party, the Christian Democracy. This one exercised papal authority within the limits consented by country's real class composition and internal and international relations of force resulted by the defeat of Nazi – fascism by Communist movement. In return Vatican didn't bear any responsibility for the consequences of its government and didn't "pay" for it.

5. It's the present phase, characterized by a more direct intervention by Vatican in country's government. In 1993 the political crisis overwhelmed Christian Democracy's regime constituted at the end of Second World War. Berlusconi "went directly into politics" for saving its industrial and financial empire from the collapse which is threatened to be drawn in by the ruin of his puppet, Bettino Craxi, thanks to whom it was built. But the circumstances obliged also Vatican to commit itself directly in country' government. So we are at present times, of Christian democracy's regime's putrefaction, which venoms stink our country, and of Communist movement's rebirth within the second wave of proletarian revolution advancing all over the world.

4. First conclusions

Today, Catholic Church and Vatican are the principal structure of bourgeois political power's system in Italy. This multinational is the principal crutch of imperialist bourgeoisie's dominion, of oppression and exploitation it exerted upon working class and other popular masses.

It's also the cause of Italian imperialist bourgeoisie's relative weakness, compared to other world imperialist groups. Many Italian imperialist bourgeoisies' exponents feel it more and more clearly as capitalism general crisis goes on and the need to find remedies (that is, to carry out the imperialist bourgeoisie's "common program") becomes pressing. The crisis of Christian Democracy's regime exploded in the Nineties. It was the crisis of the combination USA – Vatican – Italian imperialist bourgeoisie that ruled Italy in second post war period (the role of other autonomous power – Mafia, Zionists, other groups of organized criminality, etc. was lower): But it is also crisis of political and social line which that combination worked on. This Italian crisis is part and is effect of a much wider crisis: the second general crisis of capitalism. Since then, the relation among the three great protagonists – four, because of general crisis and of collapse of socialist field a fourth has been added them: the European Union – are precarious and tendentially conflictual.

The Church, headed by Vatican, is by far the greatest Italian anti-Communist political force. However, it cannot give imperialist bourgeoisie what it gave in previous phase. Its influence remains overwhelming in school and children's formation and wide in cultural field, but its hegemony upon peasants disappeared with the peasants and also its hegemony upon women is much reduced. Shortly, Vatican has become stronger in financial and political system, compared to its accomplices, but its hegemony, its capability to direct intellectually and morally the mass of population is greatly reduced. The imperialist bourgeoisie is more and more intolerant of the quota that Vatican and its Church suck parasitically from the total richness that country produced, of general negative influence their parasitic nature exert on the entire country to the detriment of its structures' effectiveness and its manpower's productivity, of Church's awkward role in every field. It feels Vatican and its Church as a hindrance for the realization of its "common program". In each important transformation, the imperialist bourgeoisie will get cross with Vatican: the invalid will stumble in his crutch. But to free itself from Vatican and build another power structure is a task by far beyond its forces. As the popular masses' resistance to crisis' advancement and Communist movement's rebirth will grow, the relations between imperialist bourgeoisie and Church will become more conflicting and their unity more necessary to face revolution.

Political crisis obliged Vatican to commit itself more directly in country's government, to deal with direction in detail. It reduced margins of tolerance among Vatican, imperialist bourgeoisie, USA, EU and lower autonomous powers. It increases pressures on Vatican; it brings to light its earthly power and its consequences. It increases contrasts between Church and other sovereign powers. The contrasts of popular masses with imperialist bourgeoisie may become contrast with Church, if Communist movement's rebirth advances.

Church and Vatican's evil role in our country's life is bound to become stronger and more evident. They are not only the main support of imperialist bourgeoisie's power. They're also the principal source of corruption of social life in our country, both for their anti democratic and theocratic (feudal) nature that doesn't recognize any inalienable right to popular masses, but only granted rights, charity and alms, benedictions and maledictions, and for the hidden character of its power. The Vatican gives orders but don't take responsibility for them, doesn't accept to be valued by the results of its direction, hides behind men and parties: the only judge is God, which only the Church and the Vatican talk to. This contributed to make country's life less understandable at first sight, increases the confusion of consciousness and mistrust among popular masses, hides the real conflicts of interests and feeds a general climate of hypocrisy, duplicity and irresponsibility that characterize all the ruling class and contaminate the whole country.

In our country every way of progress passes through Vatican and Church's suppression. Every individual, group, movement, who, pressed and urged by necessity will try to reform the country, will get cross with the obstacle constituted in every sector of life by Vatican and Church's interest, and by the forces they can mobilize in their support. Therefore, the Communist party will be able to mobilize a wide front in the struggle to suppress Vatican and its ecclesiastic structure, if it maintains its autonomy and practices mass line as main method of work and direction.

In order to make Italy a new socialist country, to seize power, to pull down imperialist bourgeoisie's power, Italian working class must suppress Vatican and its Church. It's a task it can't get out of, without which it can get no emancipation for itself or socialism. It will be an internationalist contribute it will give to popular masse of the entire world. In order to accomplish it, Italian working class may get help and solidarity by international Communist and democratic movement.

It's impossible that Vatican and Church recycle themselves in socialist society, as they did in bourgeois one. Even if by their nature they are institutions of feudalism, and therefore outside the bourgeois society, they adapted themselves to it and became its component. It is not possible that such a thing occurs in socialist society, whatever efforts Vatican and Church could do for updating themselves.

Surely, in next years the Church will do new important concessions about doctrine, in order to make its world conception less mortifying for its believers' reason. The same it will do for rites, to mitigate the presence of aspects degraded, self-injurer, racist, ancient, tied to a now far stadium of human civilization. To get out of its crisis of recruitment, it will allow women to enter into some lower ecclesiastic offices and introduce growing derogations of ecclesiastic celibacy. In matter of morals, it must at least "move with the times" authorizing contraceptive practices, sanitary assistance to abortion, euthanasia, divorce and homosexual relations for its believers. However, the morals promoted by Church will be out of date, deaf and alien from needs put by the relation of individuals with rest of nature and with himself, with other people and with society as they really are today, far from the intellectual and moral role each individual has to rise to participate in society's direction. With these concessions, the Church will try to limit uneasiness and instability of the mass of "shepherds" and, most of all, the mass exodus of its "little sheep" that, excluded from rites because of bad behaviour, easily lose their faith in Church itself. And there are not enough to compensate that exodus the measures more and more largely taken by the States in charge of public expenditure in order to make up for decline of believers' participation in financing and supporting the Church. In fact, the problem is not mainly financial, but of hegemony, of intellectual and moral direction.

In contrast of every concessions the Church will do, attempts will rise to come back to the intransigent practice of old rites, morals, doctrine and discipline as Council of Trent coded them. Attempts will rise to gather the believers who will try to get remedies to the present ills by going back to the past in more restricted but more compact and combative groups, "in special forces". So it was did with not ecclesiastic leaders but with Church's favour, by the movements that promoted the reactionary mobilization of popular masses, Fascism, Nazism, Zionism, etc., during the first wave of proletarian revolution in imperialist countries. Maybe that those groups acquire large diffusion, because bourgeois society's agony is very painful and compels people to find solution even seemingly absurd and surely macabre, with no future, desperate. Maybe that these groups get historical importance, as new forms of masses' reactionary mobilization that bourgeoisie will try to provoke during the next wave of proletarian revolution. But, even apart of this contrasting reactions, its concessions will note make the Church compatible with socialist society: they will only be a new step towards its disappearance, that Communist movement will set off in a positive sense. As former ones, also bourgeois society is founded on the division of population in classes of exploiters and exploited, oppressors and oppressed. The great majority of people are excluded from cultural patrimony of society, emarginated from direction of their own individual and social life that is in

hands of ruling class and its auxiliaries: they remain manpower and mass for manoeuvre by powerful people. More or less important remnants of personal dependence relations (as that of the “little sheep” by “shepherds”) that characterized old societies are completely compatible with bourgeois society. By some adaptation they can be integrated into it. In fact, this is happened in imperialist era, in various bourgeois economic – social formations. Nothing similar can be repeated in socialist society. Surely humanity can overcome the decay it has been brought to by the contrast between its productive forces and its social relations, between the reality they face and the conception and morals the bourgeoisie inculcates individuals until it makes them psychologically ill, disabled, schizophrenic and maladjusted. But humanity will overcome this decay only on condition that its members transform themselves and become en masse conscious protagonists and directors of their own individual and social life.

Children’s education and integration in society, women’s emancipation and intellectual and moral reformation are matters which such implications and such importance for the construction of a new higher social order that no party seriously intended to solve our country’s problems can get out of dealing with as an essential part of its program. Sexual relations, sexual repression and “liberation” and sexual ethics have an important and deep role in our life. Neither the old rules imposed to oppressed classes all along history founded on class division, nor to repropose the myth of the “good savage” or of “return back to nature” in sexual matters can bear in front of the real struggle for emancipation and creation of a new social order. Crimes, violence, traffics directly tied to sexual relations and institutes (and even more those indirectly tied to this) multiply and constitute an important part of present decay. Huge energies are wasted to solve simple problems. Until women don’t get en masse not only a real economic and intellectual independence in front of men, but also a new way to conceive themselves and their role in sexual relations, the sexual question will remain full of morbid character and negative effects. Well, the solution of all these questions in our country has also Vatican and Church’s suppression as premise and climax.

Therefore, Vatican and Church’s suppression is a necessary and unavoidable passage for getting out from social decay and take again the way of progress. It’s also quite possible, owing to nature itself of Vatican and Church. On the contrary, we Communists would do wrong thinking to suppress Catholic or any else religion. Religion is the way men have conceived, represented and managed their individual and social relation with the world (25). Religion has had an important role in humanity’s history, and perhaps it will continue to have it for some time (for instance, see the role of religion in these years in anti-imperialist democratic revolution of Arabian and Muslim peoples). All peoples have created religions. At its birth every religion reflected the concrete conditions of peoples within which it was born, and supported those peoples in their work. As long it could have survived beyond the conditions justifying its birth and even become an instrument of political direction in the hands of ruling classes, we Communist cannot abolish it, for the nature itself of the revolution we want to promote and direct (26). Religions will go to their end as men and women will find them no more useful. Some passed and will pass directly and immediately to a higher, scientific and experimental conception of the world, and to morals fit for present humanity’s tasks. (27) Some other will arrive at it reinterpreting old religions for the tasks of present struggle. What socialist revolution can and has to do is to give religious freedom to Catholics, as well as to the rest of population: freedom to handle their own conception, their moral principles, and rites by themselves, at last free from the authority Vatican and Church (ecclesiastic structure, clergy) pretend to impose in God’s name, through monopoly of buildings and other means of cult, moral blackmails and physical compulsion when and where they can. History of Protestant, Muslim, Buddhist, Hinduist and other religions shows that religions’ history is different from history of Papacy, Caliphate, etc.

The way of Vatican’s and Church’ suppression by socialist revolution is exactly indicated by the social role they assumed in imperialist era and by consequent contradictions determining its decay. This tie and that role will become deadly for Church – Vatican and imperialist bourgeoisie, in front

of Communist movement's rebirth and the development of a new wave of proletarian revolution in all the countries of the world: imperialist, oppressed and ex - socialist countries. What saved Church from death and gave it a shot in the arm, the "invalid's crutch" to support decadent bourgeoisie against rising Communist movement, indicate its fate as well. On one side the connection between Church and bourgeois society will become closer and closer, its political intervention more and more direct and so it will be more and more involved in class struggle and in contradiction between popular masses and imperialist bourgeoisie. On the other side Church is and will be more and more involved in contradictions among imperialist countries. From here, contradictions between Church and believers will start to increase and, as a consequence, so will do the contradictions within Church itself.

The strain that Vatican does for conceal its past and present role in our country's government shows the fear it has to be overwhelmed by the political crisis of capitalism and clearly indicated the way we Communist have to follow:

- To make the unmasking (therefore inquiry and information) and denounce of Church's role and its implication in everything makes popular masses' life difficult, miserable and bitter, as an important part of our work in second and third front (see the General Plan of work of (n)PCI), of our propaganda and agitation.
- To give a right place to the economical practical claims of popular masses against Church and Vatican in their claiming struggles
- To make emerge clearly and strongly Vatican's active and passive (for that it does an that it doesn't do) responsibilities in the decay which our country is in, and in the undeclared extermination war imperialist bourgeoisie carries out against popular masses all over the world: the greater is Vatican's force and the wider its suite, the greater is its responsibility for the situation we're within and for events that are going to happen.(28)

Already today in our country there is no sectorial event or decision of some importance, which Church's interests are not directly involved in or where the Church itself is not directly involved. Only imperialist bourgeoisie's fear and complicity, modern revisionists' servility and obligingness and Communist movement's weakness till now have avoided that its role was spread in any crisis and event. (29) Imperialist bourgeoisie's spokespersons, revisionists, reformists and any kind of opportunists constantly and systematically protected Vatican and Church (for services and favours they received by them), to prejudice of popular masses' right to know: they concealed or minimize their misdeeds, crimes, responsibilities, indifference to popular masses' suffering.

International relations, that is, for our country, foreign policy, are a field of contrasts between imperialist bourgeoisie's groups and Vatican and between Vatican and popular masses. Vatican can't accept the transformation of EU in a political power: it couldn't have any more licenses, immunities (from inquiries, controls and justice), fiscal exemptions, privileges, monopolies and financial power it has today in Italy. The latest winter events of Antonio Fazio, of Work National Bank and Antonveneta Bank showed a side of this problem. Vatican is allied to USA in sabotaging European Union's political enforcement. On the other side, EU can serve European and Italian imperialist groups' interests only becoming a political power, So, Vatican is obliged to support US imperialism also in its preventive wars, because it needs its benevolence and protection in Europe and in the world, as well as because of pressures of US imperialists, who unscrupulously utilize American clergy's financial and sexual crimes and US Protestant churches' competition. However, the support of US imperialism contrasts with the role Church is trying to assume for maintaining what still remains of its hegemony upon popular masses, that is its role of dispenser of hopes in heaven to the masses beaten down by the undeclared war of extermination, the role of chaplain consoling while executioner's killing.

As regard our country's internal policy, there is no field where aren't at stake Church and Vatican's important interests. Bank, insurance and financial system, fiscal regime, destination of public expenditure, bank and commercial and professional men's secret, registration of exchange and other financial securities, publicity and transparency of balances and fiscal declarations, property and use of soils (zoning regulations, planning permissions, public works), regime of rents, protection of environment and environmental improvements, artistic patrimony (property, conservation and management), school, hospital, assistance and sanitary system, show business, museums, tourism, communications, careers in Public Administration, work relations, and so on: these are some of the sectors where who formulates laws and who controls their administration and application must care not to damage Church's interests and must quickly meet its wishes and demands. Adding to this other sectors as scientific research, historical research and management of State archives and secret, marriages legislation, family laws and everything concern sexual relations, we begin to have an idea about how much Church conditions the State and to understand why in Italy the Public Administration is so demotivated, parasitic, corrupted, irresponsible, overbearing towards weaklings and weak towards powers, and "inexplicably" ineffectual. Finally, let's add that in all these sectors and especially dealing with crimes which the clergy is implicated in (financial crimes and speculations, frauds, sexual violence and abuses, usury, circumvention of incapables), Justice administration and police activity must close one or both eyes every time they had to do with Church or Vatican's organs and Church's members or their relatives, dummies and favourites (that is hundred of thousand of people scattered in the entire country), and that in their turn all swindlers who have interest, will, social position and means to do it take advantage of the situation created by respect of Church's interests and privileges. This is the reason why in Italy every government always proclaims the struggle against tax evasion, and this always remains a dead letter. This explains as well hundreds others Public Administration's deficiencies and many "mysteries" of our country.

If, as it's probable, the Church will become promoter centre of popular masses' reactionary mobilization in Italy that is what imperialist bourgeoisie needs, in next future it will intensify its activity in popular masses' mobilization and organization to hamper Communist movements rebirth, to prevent the Communist from orientating and directing the resistance that popular masses are opposing to advancement of crisis, to prevent popular masses' revolutionary mobilization. Doing this, the Church will have to reckon with the heritage that first wave of proletarian revolution settled within popular masses in matter of consciousness and organization: already today everywhere the imperialist bourgeoisie had to recruit mercenaries and volunteers because it cannot trust on young people's mass. Anyway, it will create a wide field, which we Communists can change in a fertile ground for us, considering the experience of oppression and exploitation that also the popular masses mobilized by Church have had: it is and will be completely in our favour. We mustn't address the masses levering on our consciousness, but on their experience and on progressive side of their consciousness. We shall not say: "We do so because we're Communists, we're left-wing". We, Communist and left-wing people, shall show the popular masses, the ones who worship God as well, how things stand, who are their real enemies and who are their friends, what they must and can do to end the compulsions they suffer on earth. We lever on left wing of its believer themselves for liberating themselves from Church, in name of their class' experience.

We don't fear the problem of direction. It would be wrong to put as a question to be decided beforehand, with top management's agreements. The struggle that popular masses had to carry out to face current crisis is not an academic discussion, or an electoral campaign, or an assembly even heated and tumultuous, with rules and regulations before fixed. It will be a severe, painful, tenacious and long struggle. In every severe struggle that puts at stake popular masses by millions and in which millions of people have at stake the life of them and of their loved ones, there aren't the diplomatic agreements or the backroom deals that decide who directs. Unavoidably, it directs

who most rightly understands conditions and forms of the struggle, and step by step launches paroles in which who struggles with decision recognizes his aspirations and so appropriate them.

Marxism – Leninism – Maoism and mass line will be the instruments of our victory in isolating Church and Vatican from popular masses, overthrowing the reactionary mobilization in revolutionary mobilization and at last liberating our country and the world from Church and Vatican’s defilement.

Plinio M.

Notes

1. Our conception and our line combine the universal heritage of international Communist movement with the understanding and elaboration of subjective and objective historical and present conditions of our country. This combination of universal and particular is the Italian way to socialism. It isn’t enough to claim the universal and historical heritage of Communist movement, as in old Italian Communist Party dogmatists did against modern revisionists. Not by chance, those dogmatists didn’t succeed to face revisionists successfully. They were defeated and broken up. One by one they surrendered or cooperated with revisionists or fell in isolation. In every country with a tradition, with its own characteristic personality formed during centuries, Communist movement must have national peculiarities (Mao used to say that “Marxism has to be translated in Chinese”) in order to carry out successfully the common internationalist work to create the international association of workers, the new humanity.

2. Modernism was a reformist movement of Catholic Church developed owing to influence of Socialism over Church. This Catholic Church’s crisis was made easier by the modernization of Leo XIII and characterized the reign of Pius X (1903 – 1914). In 1907, Pius X condemned Modernism by the encyclical *Pascendi*. The condemnation was followed by the scattered persecution of Modernists and the imposition of an anti-Modernist vow to all ecclesiastic and laic Church cadres.

3. Antonio Gramsci is the only leader of Italian Communist movement who systematically and completely studied the strategy of socialist revolution in our country from a Communist, materialist – dialectical, Marxist – Leninist point of view. We need to graft what is specific for Italy in our strategy in his work (and not in the deformation Togliatti did of it). His work is exposed in *The Construction of the Communist party (1923 – 1926)*, (Italian edition: Einaudi, 1971), and in *Prison Note –books* (Italian edition: Einaudi, 1971 and 2001). These are works to be studied with attention to Communist movement’s problems of that age, and not as treatises about the “general theory”.

4. Anyway, it must be noted the great progress carried out by Communist movement in our country. Former movements of peasant masses were led by reactionary forces, which were anti – bourgeois only because they were feudal. Starting from movements of 1893 – 1898 (since Sicilian Fasces to Revolt of Milan), they were movement of workers and peasants instead. Feudal forces, likewise the bourgeoisie, stayed on the defensive and allied with bourgeoisie: as a matter of fact, the crisis of 1893 – 1898 signed the end of the armistice between Reign of Italy and Catholic Church, the end of *non expedit* and the beginning of their programmatic and systematic cooperation against Communist movement. The crisis of 1943 – 1947 constituted a still higher stage compared with formers. The unity workers – peasants wasn’t any more unity based on facts and ideals. It was also undertaken, promoted and directed by the conscious and organized Communist movement, the first Italian Communist Party. This one wasn’t equal to its task, it wasn’t able to lead the popular masses to victory, but it did what it succeeded to do by grasping the unity between workers and peasants.

5. Obviously, when the number of dissenting, expelled, excommunicated, etc. believers goes beyond a certain level, it endangers social role, and then power and recruitment, etc., of Church, so clergy looks for remedies. Soon or later “God changes his opinion”, his eternal revealed ideas and his “rules of nature” change. It happened again and again, and surely it will happen in next future. Church and its clergy run after their believers, when they don’t succeed anymore in frighten or submit them, when blackmail and threats of hell and God’s curses are no more enough to keep them close to Church itself.

It’s important to observe which problems “particularly interest Church”, in order to understand Church’s nature and role. Surely, Church is less interested in usury, financial speculations, tax evasion, lock-outs and dismissal than in an extramarital relationship. Church is less worried by the undeclared extermination war that bourgeoisie is carrying out against popular masses all around the world for mantaining its rule, and by ten millions of people dying because of it, than by sanitary assistance granted to women who have an abortion.

6. The cases of contraposition of believers’ community to Church are many even beyond general movements like Modernism and Theology of Liberation. The renovation of Concordat combined by Craxi’s government with Vatican in 1984 introduced a series of means hostile to believers’ autonomy and strengthening ecclesiastic hierarchy. For instance,

financial contributes before given by the State to parishes are now given to Italian Episcopal Conference (CEI): parish priest who doesn't obey has his supplies cut off. The fact that Vatican wanted this changes confirms that tension between base communities and hierarchy has grown.

7. In every country, democratic revolution implies agrarian revolution. In the greatest part of oppressed countries agriculture has a great importance, and Church is a great landlord (so they are its dioceses, parishes, charitable organizations, convents, congregations, etc.) So, it's a direct target of democratic revolutions and rabid opponent of any democratic revolution. Not to mention of its hierarchies and its better ratepayer believers' hostility to cultural and psychological emancipation every revolution produces or strengthens in great masses of the population. On the other side, every democratic revolution in oppressed countries is our ally in struggle against Vatican

8. The innumerable requests for pardon by John Paul II for the role Roman Church performed in wars, slaughters and other crimes of the far past (Crusades, conquest of America, Inquisition, and so on) serve to divert attention from Roman Church's responsibility and connivance in foul deeds done by bourgeoisie in imperialist era, in the undeclared extermination war that's going on around us and also staring us in the face, in elimination of conquests, in persecution of immigrants, and so on. Beneficence and aid private initiatives hush up individuals' regret and sense of guilt. They don't wipe out the support to Authorities and political trends responsible for those foul deeds.

9. The failure wasn't due to the impermeability of Turkish or Chinese peoples (or other peoples not European or not of European origin) to European culture: to a "natural" or "racial" difference, etc., between East and West. It's enough to consider the rapid diffusion of liberalism in Nineteenth century and most of all of Marxism in Twentieth century: the reason of failure was the fact that the conception of the world, with ethics and rites connected, that Roman Church wanted to spread was the fantastic transfiguration of European feudal society. It reflected the intellectual and psychological and scientific knowledge level of development the European people had in Middle Age. On one side it's similar (homologous) to this one that Turkish, Chinese and other peoples already elaborated or assimilated, not by chance Cusano, Ricci and other saw thousand common points between Christianity and religions of peoples they wanted to evangelize. On the other side it wasn't (as Liberalism and Marxism were) a higher conception of the world able to represent, illustrate and at the same time support and strengthen the existing and scattered trends to overcome the existing social conditions, as Christianity was for oppressed classes and peoples of Roman Empire and for Germanic, Northern and Slav peoples. Cusano, Ricci and company were trying to sell to Turkish, Chinese and other peoples what they already had, nor they have the force to compel them to change their dresses with equally effective European ones. They wanted to conquer Turkish, Chinese and other for their king, when they already had a king of equal worth. It's the same reason why the Christians, who converted Germanic invaders, didn't succeed to convert Arabians when they invaded Asia Minor and Northern Africa. Arabians already had an equally worth superstructure and furthermore they had the advantage of weapons and political organization over Middle Age Europe.

10. The formula *cuius regio, eius religio* (everybody must profess the religion of prince of the country where he lives), stated by Augsburg Peace (1555), sanctioned the unity in religious diversity of Europe, Pope's defeat and subordination of religion to state Authority and so the Church's need to became state.

11. We can observe that slavery persisted in Christian world. It even recovered force and assumed again an important economic for almost four hundred years, from Sixteenth to Nineteenth century, in Christian countries, between their American colonies and Africa. Just because of it we must distinguish two different plans. 1. the subversion of Roman Empire's concrete political and social order starting from the elimination of slavery, its constituting cell. 2. the struggle against slavery in general, that is abolition of slavery, determination of slavery as a crime, as anthropophagy or homicide. The first point is the real historical process carried out by the flag of Christianity. The second is a process historically not completed: there were steps on and steps back, as it's unavoidable in a society founded on oppression and exploitation. Similarly, bourgeoisie's victory didn't fulfilled equality, liberty and fraternity for all, as was written in its banner. However, Christians didn't ever more set the objective to reintroduce slavery as universal base of their society, even if they accepted and practiced and still practice it. So it has happened and happens by Muslims and elsewhere. Dogmatists, taking Gospel literally, found absurd and impossible for human beings to be slave, so they seriously discussed if slaves were human beings or not, if they have a soul or not. The letter of faith told them that men couldn't be slaves, so slaves weren't men. Moreover, the same occurred about women. Wasn't it absurd that they were "God's daughters and redeemed by Christ", considering what they were suffering? Holy Fathers of the Church animatedly discussed if women have a soul. Italian "philosophers" as Marcello Pera and Costanzo Preve would have felt themselves at ease in such meetings. And they are not alone!

12. It's useful to quote one of Antonio Gramsci' texts of his *Prison Note-books* (Note-book 1, Text 93, note 4, p. 2518 Einaudi publisher, Turin, Italy). Gramsci reports this exemplary talk between a prelate of Curia and a zealous Catholic of the intellectual kind. This one moans about the roughness he hear told by the priest while celebrating a marriage:

"Why, monsignor, does the Church ask us to believe such things?"

"The Church – he answered - doesn't ask me or you to believe that"

“But there are things hard to believe, even in Gospel”

“Yes, as a matter of fact there are many exaggerations in Gospel too”

“But – the zealous man replied sincerely scandalized – Bible and Gospel are base of all, spring of Christianity, and we are all Christian, aren’t we, monsignor?”

“We are prelates,” answered he.

The moral is that prelates have not to believe, they have to make the masses believe. It’s the same rotten doctrine that two Italian philosophers Croce and Gentile put as a guide of school politics during Fascism: the Church has to teach the masses to be religious, we philosophers teach the rulers what is true.

13. Where is French Revolution born? So answered the Catholic review *La Civiltà Cattolica* (7th September 1929): “...most of all because of a great part of French Aristocracy and bourgeoisie, because from this ruling class’ corruption and apostasy until Eighteenth Century came popular mass’ corruption and apostasy in France, also then coming true that *regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis* (everybody finishes by follow king’s example, editor’s note). Voltaire was the idol of that part of aristocracy corrupted and corrupting its people, whose faith and decency it was getting scandalous seductions, and so cutting its own throat. And even if they became theoretical opposition to the rise of Rousseau with his subversive democracy contrasting Voltaire’s aristocracy, the two streams of apostasy – as between two wicked coryphaei – seemed to start from opposite mistakes, flowed in one same practical and fatal conclusion, in swelling revolutionary stream.”

In these words we can recognize the hypocrite profession of faith of many Italian political leaders of today, scoundrels like Pier Ferdinando Casini, Irene Pivetti, Silvio Berlusconi, people who lecture to “common people” about indissolubility of marriage and Christian virtue of chastity with all torments, scruples and disasters occurring to whom do not take it seriously, while they happily live together in double or triple weddings.

14. For instance, in peninsula Machiavelli’s works were printed for the last time in 1554. The last edition of Boccaccio’s *Decameron* was in 1557. From then on many novelists’ and poets’ works were edited only in reduced format. The works of Giordano Bruno, Tommaso Campanella (1568 – 1639), Giulio Cesare Vanini (1585-1619), Galileo Galilei were printed only out of the peninsula (in Germany, France, Holland). The great publishers disappeared from the peninsula. After Galilei, scientific research declined: the trial against Galilei (1616) has had its effect. Ecclesiastic censorship affected painters too.

15. By then in Italy, cities were many and populous and so they stayed, but without becoming industrial cities. Still in Twenties of Twentieth century in Italy the percentage of urban population was around twice as much as in France, even if in Italy the industrial development was still very much lower than in France. It was exemplary the case of Rome and Naples, two of the biggest cities, where there was no or little industrial production. Urban population was closely connected with the parasitic character of Italian ruling classes and Church’s important role.

16. On the subject, see E. Sereni, *Il capitalismo nelle campagne 1860-1900*, the review of Giovanni Ansaldo to *La rivoluzione meridionale*, of Guido Dorso, in *Il lavoratore*, Genova, 1st October 1925, the relation of Sonnino and Franchetti on their enquiry on Southern Italy (1875), the relation of Stefano Jacini on its *Inchiesta agraria*. See also the dialogue with a Sicilian monk after landing at the isle Cesare Abba referred in *Da Quarto al Voltorno. Noterelle di uno dei Mille*, quoted by A. Gramsci in its Prison Note-books (Text 43, Note-book 1, p.40. Einaudi, op. cit.)

17. Regarding origins of Mafia, see *Cenni sulla questione della mafia*, in *Rapporti Sociali* n. 28 (July 2001) p. 31-34. It will never be enough remembered that Italian bourgeoisie told history of Risorgimento in an incomplete way, deforming it to glorify itself, Monarchy and Vatican. The management of Archives, the scarce or no use of them and the long secret that covered them open the eye to everybody wants to see.

18. Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872) was uninterested in the problems of agrarian revolution, as it’s very well testified by its letters to Italian Workers’ Societies. Regarding to it, see the criticism of Mazzini’s position Karl Marx did in his letter to F. Engels of 13th September 1851 and in that one to J. Weydemeyer of 11th September 1851. All these letters are quoted in Note 18 to the Text 43 of the Note – book 1 of A. Gramsci (p. 2476, Einaudi, op. cit.).

19. The fourth of the Theses of Lion, approved by third Congress of old Italian Communist Party (January 1926), and drafted under direction of Antonio Gramsci, states that in Italy “there is no possibility of revolution but socialist revolution”. It’s a thesis that the revisionists led by Palmiro Togliatti (1893 – 1964) put back into the drawer during and after Resistance.

20. One of the important differences between workers’ capitalist exploitation and its preceding forms is the fact that the capitalist directly intervenes in organization and direction of work. Therefore he brings all the social patrimony of knowledge and arts that ruling class has in choice and setting of productive means, in organization of working activity, in planning products and in entire activity around production intended in strict sense of the world. The specific and

typical intellectual of capitalism is organizer of production, intended in large sense of the world. Instead, a parasitic ruling class limit itself to extortion of “protection money”. But obviously we need to know why Italian productive bourgeoisie accepted and accepts to pay “protection money” to those parasitic classes, particularly to Church. It accepts to share the yield of exploitation because parasitic classes give a contribution to keep workers quiet, which is an essential thing for it. Today, old parasitic forms of exploitation confound themselves with most modern ones: also the typical bourgeoisie of imperialist era collects coupons on its share and bonds without directly intervention in working process.

21. See E. Sereni, *Il capitalismo nelle campagne 1860-1900*, ed. Einaudi 1968.

22. In order to better understand the situations of double sovereignty so created in each zone, we have to think to relations between the Nazis forces of occupation and Black Brigades in Republic of Salò in 1943 – 1945 in Northern Italy; to relations between Israeli Zionist forces which occupied Southern Lebanon for ten years and quisling Lebanese forces; to relations between the forces of colonial powers and indigenous quisling troops.

23. The Guarantee-Act (1871) provided that the State had stopped to pay this sum yearly into the bank account opened at Pope’s disposal if he wouldn’t begin to draw it within 5 years since law was approved. The Pope was very careful not to touch such a fund: it would have mean to recognize the new State and the end of Papal State in front of the other European States, particularly of Austro – Hungarian Empire with whom he intrigued against Unity of Italy and blackmailed Italian State. Even so, Italian State continued to pay the sum yearly until 1928. In the light of this, it’s also more indicative of real relations the fact that State tolerated every license, speculation and crime in estate and financial field by Church and Roman “black aristocracy”. So the State itself removed any need to accept its generous contribution by Church. At the same time, the State ripped peasants and other workers off with taxes...also for setting aside the 50 millions which Vatican didn’t care of, thanks to the estate and financial speculations that State itself tolerated and favoured!

24. The *non expedit* was the formula by which Pius the Ninth forbidden Catholics to officially cooperate with the new State. But also this “not participation of Catholics” means that the great majority of the ruling class, from government to high bureaucracy, was constituted by people devoted to Vatican far as servility, but participated “personally”: Vatican requested them every kind of services but didn’t take any responsibility for the directives it gave in the kitchen. It was one of most huge instances of double morals: in municipal administrations it was less easy to control things in the kitchen and manage everybody in a hidden way (that is the reason of both State and Church’s hostility towards “local autonomies”). In those cases Vatican didn’t hesitate to create Catholics’ coalitions, as the Roman Union for the administrative elections in November 1871.

25. Regarding to it, it’s useful to read the article *The Vatican*, in *Social Relations*, n. 14-15 (Winter-Spring 1994) pp. 16-17.

26. Regarding to it, see what Karl Marx says in *Misery of Philosophy*, about some exponents of French revolution who attempted to “abolish religion”.

27. Clericals, and with them “laics” as Italian “philosophers” Marcello Pera and Costanzo Preve, uphold that there aren’t morals without religion that founds them. They accuse us Marxists of “moral relativism”, that is to have no morals. “If God doesn’t exist, everything’s allowed” – they say. It’s understandable that only the master, for people with a slave or slaver mentality, can do life’s rules. “No master, no rules.” “When the cat’s away the mice will play!” As a matter of fact, once the mantle of duress as been broken, several times experience showed people who suffered it, but little or nothing did for breaking it, which get wild, as drunks, until the practical needs of life recall the to reality. At that point, if revolution has in itself forces to go on, it comes out what’s confirmed by the whole course of human history: in every situation humanity better survives and advances, the more there become rules of personal conduct for every individual the ones better corresponding to the work the concrete society has to do in those concrete conditions. Anyway, if morals and religion had come from God, why would he have scattered so many morals and religions and sometimes also changed his mind? Only when the connection is lost, that is only when morals survived to their times, or when morals imposed to members of oppressed classes and peoples by ruling class in order to maintain oppression, morals are presented as God’s commandments, the earthly sanction of its violation is reinforced by curse and divine condemnation and its faithful observance is recompensed as well as master and also God’s benevolence. Worst crimes are done in the name of God, so as many pious and heroic works.

28. Particularly, we have to denounce Church and Vatican’s present role in many ex – colonies. Here they have great hegemony and power. They monopolize distribution of supplies, sanitary assistance and other imperialist countries and multinationals’ “aids”. They use their political power and intellectual and moral direction upon the popular masses to divert them from the struggle for emancipation and economical, political and cultural development against imperialism and puppet governments of comprador and bureaucratic bourgeoisie, and to recruit employees for their international activity (selected emigration), so further impoverishing oppressed countries in this way as well.

29. There are some exemplary cases. When the State saved from failure of Michele Sindona’s Italian Private Bank, deposits of five hundred holders who were in tabulations miraculously vanished, Vatican and its prelates’ involvement

in the case saved everybody from bad publicity and judicial and patrimonial consequences. The unwise magistrate of S. Maria Capua Vetere who made public the involvement of cardinal Giordano of Naples in a wide usury racket, burned his career. Obviously, because of the reasons indicated the hidden remains unknown. Its existence is revealed only by the fury which are cancelled, by few cases emerging because of accidental reasons or by idleness and ineptitude of apparatuses whose members are personally not at all incompetents (many of them, however, owed their position to Vatican and Church themselves).